

Guru Tegh Bahadur and The Persian Chroniclers

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FOREWORD

Guru Tegh Bahadur's life was characterized by a fearless pursuit of the highest ideals of human existence and his martyrdom came as a culmination of that pursuit. Three hundred years ago he calmly sacrificed his life for the freedom of conscience and his example has become all the more precious with the passage of time.

Like some other institutions in the country, Guru Nanak Dev University decided to celebrate the tercentenary of the great martyr in a befitting manner, chiefly with a programme of publications consisting of lectures, articles, booklets, monographs and full-length studies relating to the life and mission of Guru Tegh Bahadur. The Department of History, among others, has been entrusted with a part of this programme under the active guidance of its Head, Professor J. S. Grewal. The present monograph is the first fruit of the efforts being made by the Department of History to prepare a thorough historical study of Guru Tegh Bahadur.

Dr Grewal carefully analyses the Persian writers of the period of Sikh rule for their treatment of the life and martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur. His analysis is marked by balance and clarity which in the minds of many have come to be associated with him as a historian. His conclusion is unequivocal : whatever in the Persian chronicles is valuable to the present-day historian of Guru Tegh Bahadur can be traced to Sikh tradition. I have no doubt that serious scholars of history will find this monograph illuminating; the general reader will find it rewarding.

I congratulate Dr Grewal and his colleagues in the Department of History for performing this task with scholarly zeal and rigour as a token of their homage to Guru Tegh Bahadur.

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PREFACE

For a purposeful study of historical situations of great significance it is always useful to re-examine not only the earliest sources available but also the traditions of historiography developed around them. For the life and pontificate of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the *sākhī* and *bilās* literature in Gurmukhi was the earliest to develop and the Persian chronicle appeared on the scene during the period of Sikh rule. The earliest British historians of the Sikhs started making use of both these traditions. Thus, the present-day historian of Guru Tegh Bahadur has a rich and varied legacy to handle : the Gurmukhi tradition, the Persian tradition and the early British tradition. For a historical reconstruction of the life of Guru Tegh Bahadur, he has to assess the relative value of these three traditions in the light of contemporary and near contemporary evidence.

We propose for the present to take up only the Persian tradition embodied in the work of the chroniclers of the period of Sikh rule : Ghulam Husain, Buddh Singh, Bakht Mal, Khushwaqt Rai, Sohan Lal Suri, Ahmad Shah, Ghulam Muhiyuddin Butay Shah, Ganesh Das, Aliuddin and an anonymous author. This tradition has enjoyed a good deal of respect among the historians of Guru Tegh Bahadur and the general historians of the Sikhs. The early British writers were inclined to give preference to the Persian chronicle over anything written in Gurmukhi because

of the well established tradition of historical writing in Persian. The distance of the chroniclers from their subject appeared to impart a certain degree of objectivity to their story; their broad canvas presented a bird's eye view, which appeared to be much more impressive than the worm's eye view presented in the *sākhī* and *bilās* literature. No attempt was made to examine the purposes, attitudes or methods of the chroniclers. Their credibility has been so taken for granted that earlier written records are assumed to be the source of even their patently absurd statements. Indeed, if a chronicler put direct speech into the mouth of a character as a literary artifice, it was asserted that a news-reporter was present on the occasion.

How utterly useless and misleading some of the chronicles could be on certain points of early Sikh history I realized for the first time in 1966-67 while studying the pontificate of Guru Gobind Singh. However, the reputation enjoyed by the chroniclers is so considerable that the basic validity of their evidence is assumed rather than questioned even in the most recent works on Guru Tegh Bahadur. Exception is not made even in the case of a chronicler who places Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution in Lahore, consigns his body to dismemberment, not cremation, and confesses to depending upon information collected from his own contemporaries.

In the ultimate interest of a better understanding of Guru Tegh Bahadur, it is necessary to analyse the historical writing in Persian produced during the first seventy odd years of its development. The pages that

follow are the result of such an attempt. The first section presents the context in which these chronicles were compiled to clarify the purpose with which they were written. The second reproduces in English the account of Guru Tegh Bahadur given by each chronicler with a brief comment on its character to reveal the attitude and method of the chronicler. The third section discusses the value of the collective evidence presented by the chroniclers on the pontificate of Guru Tegh Bahadur. We come to the inescapable conclusion that these chroniclers did not use any written record of the first century after the pontificate of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Whatever is valuable in their accounts is traceable to the Sikh tradition.

The Persian text has been appended to this monograph for ready reference and the contents have been given in a tabulated form for an easy comparison of any one account with the others. The select bibliography includes, in addition to the chronicles, a few studies of historical writing on India and on the Sikhs, the earliest known sources, the most important works of later Gurmukhi tradition, some of the earliest works in English and some of the twentieth century works because of their direct or indirect bearing.

Several colleagues and friends have contributed to the preparation of this monograph for publication. Mr Amarwant Singh assisted in preparing the Persian text and tabulating the contents. Mr Mohanjit Singh performed a similar service for Gurmukhi works and Mr Joginder Singh Bains for the English. Mr Kewal Singh secured many of the necessary books and journals. Mr Harbhajan Singh Bath typed out the entire

manuscript with care. I am thankful to all of them. I am thankful to Dr Y. S. Bains and Dr Norma Bains for their useful suggestions on the style and presentation of this monograph. I am deeply indebted to Mr Surjit Singh Hans and Dr Indu Banga for going through the entire manuscript and for suggesting revisions at many places.

Lastly, I am extremely thankful to the Vice-Chancellor of Guru Nanak Dev University, Sardar Bishan Singh Samundri, for his kind and continued interest in the work of the Department of History. I am also thankful to him for the Foreword.

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I

THE CONTEXT

During the third quarter of the eighteenth century the followers of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh emerged successful from a life-and-death struggle against the Afghan conquerors of the Panjab and occupied the best parts of the plains between the Indus and the Jumna. During the last quarter, a large number of Sikh chiefs were ruling over small principalities in spite of the Afghans in the west and the ministers of the Mughal Emperors at Delhi. In spite of their own internecine conflicts, the more powerful among them were trying to extend their power and influence in the Panjab hills; some of them were trying to extend their territories across the Jumna.

In the first decade of the nineteenth century Ranjit Singh was gradually reducing his brother Sikh chiefs to the status of vassals, or even *jāgīrdārs*. He was particularly anxious to forestall the British in the Sutlej-Jumna Divide. But they obliged him by the Treaty of Amritsar in 1809 to confine his aggressive designs to the west of the Sutlej, and the Sikh chiefs of the Divide came under the 'protection' of the British. Ranjit Singh subjugated the Sikh chiefs of the former Mughal province of Lahore, conquered the provinces of Multan and Kashmir from the Afghans, established his control over non-Sikh principalities, in the hills as well as the plains, and carried his conquests into the Afghan dominions across the Indus.

However, the British had started showing impatience with the Maharaja before his death in 1839 and, within six more years, the successors of Ranjit Singh were shorn of all their territories to the east of the Beas and in the Panjab hills, including Kashmir. In 1849 were taken over the rest of the dominions of Ranjit Singh. The sovereign rule of the Sikhs was no more; what survived henceforth was a number of 'protected' principalities in the Sutlej-Jumna Divide.

Throughout the period of sovereign Sikh rule, the British took keen interest in the affairs of the Sikhs, first as anxious observers, then as a 'friendly' but overbearing power, and lastly as a prospective supplanter. 'Knowledge is power', a maxim familiar to the British, was extended by the servants of the East India Company to a knowledge of the past as well as the present. Their interest in the Sikh past and present, more than anything else, gave rise to historical writing on the Sikhs not only in English but also in Persian. The Persian chronicles of the Sikh period were as much a compliment to British imperialism as to Sikh rule.¹

Already in the 1770s, Henri Polier, a servant of the East India Company on deputation with Shujaudaula in Awadh, was collecting information on the Sikhs.² In 1782 George Forster was sent from

1. For some detail of the East India Company's interest in India's past and the encouragement it gave to its servants for writing on India, see J. S. Grewal, *Muslim Rule in India: The Assessments of British Historians*, Oxford University Press, Bombay 1970, 23-42.

2. For Henri Polier, see J. S. Grewal, *Muslim Rule in India*, 36 n2, 37 & n2; Ganda Singh (ed.), *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*, Calcutta 1962, 53-66.

Calcutta on the arduous journey over land and, passing through the Panjab hills in 1783, he collected information not only on the situation then prevalent in the Panjab but also on the past of the Sikhs.³ Within a few months of Forster's departure from Calcutta, Warren Hastings sent Major James Browne to Delhi as his agent. He returned to Calcutta in May, 1785, with a Persian manuscript in his possession.⁴ He had commissioned one Buddh Singh to compile a history of the rise and progress of the Sikhs, and Buddh Singh completed his *Risāla Dar Ahwāl-i-Nānak Shāh Darvesh* in 1784.⁵ The first historical work on the Sikhs in the Persian language was thus produced for the benefit of the East India Company. Seventy years later, Aliuddin was writing his *Ibratnāma* to attract the notice of the new rulers of Lahore.⁶ During the intervening period, half a dozen other writers followed in the footsteps of Buddh Singh or foreshadowed Aliuddin.

The writers patronized by the servants of the East India Company were encouraged to write specifically on Sikh history. Khushwaqt Rai, who was employed as a news-reporter in the Panjab after 1809, was asked by Colonel David Ochterlony to collect information on the Sikh past. Khushwaqt Rai did so, and gave

3. For George Forster, see J.S. Grewal, *Muslim Rule in India*, 199; Ganda Singh, *Early European Accounts*, 75-87.

4. For James Browne, see J.S. Grewal, *Muslim Rule in India*, 37 & n1; Ganda Singh, *Early European Accounts*, 1-43.

5. This is stated by Buddh Singh on the first page of his *Risāla*. See also Ganda Singh, *A Bibliography of the Panjab*, Patiala 1966, 148.

6. In the first three pages of the *Ibratnāma*, Aliuddin gives some information about himself and how he thought of writing the book. See also Ganda Singh, *A Bibliography of the Panjab*, 146.

to his work appropriately the title of *Tawārīkh-i-Sikhān*.⁷ Ahmad Shah of Batala, who wrote his *Tārīkh-i-Hīnd* for the English, was asked to pay special attention to the Sikhs and he composed a separate section devoted exclusively to Sikh history. It was entitled *Zikr-i-Guruān wā Ibtidā-i-Singhān wā Mazhab-i-Ishān*.⁸ Bakht Mal, whose short version of Sikh history was appreciated and accepted by John Malcolm, wrote another and gave it the name of *Khālsanāma*.⁹

In the case of others, whatever the formal title, the contents of the work reveal the author's preoccupation with Sikh history. Ghulam Muhiyuddin *alias* Butay Shah was encouraged by the Political Agent of British Indian Government at Ludhiana to write a history of the Panjab. He did so and gave it the title of *Tārīkh-i-Panjāb*.¹⁰ By far the bulk of this work is devoted to Sikh history. Ganesh Das wrote his *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb* in the hope of receiving patronage from the new rulers of the Panjab after 1849.¹¹ The bulk of this work too is devoted to Sikh history. Aliuddin's *Ibratnāma* was meant to be a general history of the

7. This information is available in the work of Khushwaqt Rai, at the beginning and the end. See also Ganda Singh, *A Bibliography of the Panjab*, 157.

8. A lithographed edition of this work was added to Sohan Lal's *Umdat ut-Tawārīkh*.

9. This is stated by Bakht Mal at the beginning of his work. See also Ganda Singh, *A Bibliography of the Panjab*, 168.

10. Butay Shah briefly talks of these things in the first three pages of his work. See also Ganda Singh, *A Bibliography of the Panjab*, 148.

11. According to his own statement at the beginning of the work, Ganesh Das wrote the *Chār Bāgh* as a befitting gift for the *sāhibān-i-wālā qadr* in the hope of receiving something in return. See also Ganda Singh, *A Bibliography of the Panjab*, 151.

Panjab; it is nonetheless devoted very largely to Sikh history. All these three works were compiled when the British had partially or wholly supplanted the Sikh rulers of Lahore.

The celebrated *Umdat ut-Tawārikh* of Sohan Lal Suri can also be placed in this context. He started his work in 1812, the year by which Bakht Mal and Khushwaqt Rai had completed their historical accounts of the Sikhs. Sohan Lal started recording the events of the reign of Ranjit Singh but his ambition was to write a general history of the Sikhs. Like Bakht Mal and Khushwaqt Rai, he turned to the earlier periods. Consequently, he has chronicled the events of the kingdom of Lahore from 1812 to 1849; he has covered the history of the period from 1771 to 1812 from the standpoint of the rise of Charhat Singh, Mahan Singh and Ranjit Singh into power; and he has written about the period from the time of Guru Nanak to 1771. In his systematic recording of contemporary events he stands apart from all other Persian writers of the Sikh period. Also, he is the only chronicler to have deliberately written from the standpoint of his master's rise into prominence. But the earliest portion of his work, upto 1771, he wrote like any other chronicler of the period. In 1832 and 1834, copies of Sohan Lal's work were supplied to the servants of the East India Company. They prized his work as much as they prized the work of other chroniclers.¹²

12. V. S. Suri (tr.), *Umdat ut-Tawārikh, Daftar IV, 1839-1845*, Chandigarh 1972, xxvii.

With an eye on the political concerns of the present, the servants of the East India Company encouraged native writers to collect information on the past of all those Indian powers which mattered. The Company's concern over the decline of the Mughal Empire and its interest in the rise of the successor states was the obverse and the reverse of the same political coin. Sayyid Ghulam Husain *Tabātabāi* was one of those writers who were encouraged by the servants of the East India Company to collect relevant information.¹³ His *Siyar al-Mutākhirīn*, professedly an account of the Later Mughals, was completed in 1783 and it was immediately acknowledged as the most useful work on eighteenth-century India.¹⁴ Besides falling into the category of Persian writers patronized by the servants of the East India Company, Ghulam Husain is of some relevance to us because of the notice he takes of the Sikhs in the *Siyar al-Mutākhirīn*.

There is one more chronicle which we have to consider, the *Haqīqat-i-Binā wā Urūj-i-Firqa-i-Sikhān*. It is attributed to Taimur Shah, the successor of Alīmad Shah Abdali at Kabul. But this is due to a simple mistake. The inscription on the fly-leaf of the manuscript contains a reference to the conquest of Multan by Taimur Shah and the words 'by Taimur Shah' have become the source of error. Neither in the opening lines nor in the colophone is there any

13. J. S. Grewal, *Muslim Rule in India*, 33.

14. The portion dealing with the reign of Bahadur Shah was translated into English in 1786 when a full translation was undertaken by Haji Mustafa, a French convert to Islam, who was a protege of Warren Hastings : J. S. Grewal, *Muslim Rule in India*, 33 n4.

mention of the author. When and for whom it was written is not indicated. The language used for Ahmad Shah Abdali is not respectful. But the epithets used for Imād-ul-Mulk, Ghāzīuddīn, are sufficient evidence of the author's respect for the Mughal minister. Mirza Shafi Khan is mentioned as *marhūm*; he had died in 1783. Zabita Khan is mentioned without that epithet; he was to die in 1785. Therefore it may be inferred that the *Haqīqat-i-Binā* was written in, or around, 1784 by someone connected with the Mughal court.¹⁵ This was precisely the time when James Browne was in Delhi, collecting information on the Sikhs. The threat posed by the Sikhs to the territory of Delhi and their excursions into the Jumna-Ganges Doab figure prominently in the *Haqīqat-i-Binā*. Even if James Browne did not commission this work, it was the kind of work in which he and his employers in Calcutta were interested. Their positive interest in Sikh history and the lack of interest in Sikh history among the Mughal, the Afghan and the Sikh rulers of the time, leave no doubt that the *Haqīqat-i-Binā*, like the *Risāla* of Buddh Singh and the *Siyar* of Ghulam Husain, was written for the East India Company.

Thus, between 1780 and 1855, we find ten Persian chroniclers writing long or short accounts of the origin and progress of the Sikhs under the direct patronage or indirect encouragement of the East India Company. Sohan Lal Suri is only a partial exception. Three of these accounts were compiled in the 1780s,

15. This convincing argument has been put forth recently by Dr Ganda Singh in "The Place of Baba Banda Singh's Execution", *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Vol. II, No. 2, 117-31. In his *Select Bibliography* even Dr Ganda Singh attributes the work to Taimur Shah Abdali, the King of Kabul.

three in the second decade of the nineteenth century,
one in the 1820s and three of these were compiled
during the decade after the Anglo-Sikh war of 1845-46.
None of these writers was a Sikh. Five of them were
Muslim and five Hindu. None of them wrote for
'self-understanding'; none of them wrote with any
political or social commitment; and none of them
wrote for a wide audience. They all wrote for ruling
patrons and with a common purpose : to collect and
compile available information on the Sikhs. In their
approach and methods as much as in their general
purpose they are all alike. Most of them wrote so
independently of one another that it is not necessary
to examine them in a strict chronological order for
their treatment of the pontificate of Guru Tegh
Bahadur.

II

THE CHRONICLES

1

RISĀLA DAR AHWĀL-I-NĀNAK SHĀH DARVESH

At the beginning of the *Risāla Dar Ahwāl-i-Nānak Shāh Darvesh*, Buddh Singh states that in A. H. 1197 (A.D. 1783) he accepted service with James Browne, and a year later Browne asked him to write about the followers of Guru Nanak. In the early 1780s the Sikhs were threatening Delhi and the territories of the Nawab Wazir of Awadh who was an ally of the East India Company. Major Browne had been sent by Warren Hastings as his agent to Delhi and, among other things, he commissioned Buddh Singh to compile a history of the rise and progress of the Sikhs. Browne's own statement about the *Risāla* is significant: 'This Persian sketch of an history I have translated into English, and now beg leave to offer to my honourable masters, as I am persuaded that the rapid progress of this sect will hereafter render a knowledge of them, their strength, and government, very important to the government of Bengal'.¹⁶

16. James Browne, *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sicks*, Introduction (reprinted by Dr Ganda Singh in the *Early European Accounts*), 13.

On 17 September, 1787, James Browne wrote to the Chairman of the Court of Directors that conformably to his wishes Browne had collected relevant information on the Sikhs including the extent of their territories, the names of their chiefs, and the number of their forces: *Early European Accounts*, 11.

Obviously the political success of the Sikhs in the late eighteenth century had made them important for the East India Company. British interest in the Sikh past was a compliment to the political success of the Sikhs in the present.

Browne refers to Devanagari manuscripts in the possession of two gentlemen of Lahore he had 'met with'; and he asked them to translate one of those manuscripts into Persian.¹⁷ Buddh Singh refers to the collaboration of one Ajaib Singh of Malerkotla in compiling the *Risāla* but he does not refer to Devanagari or any other manuscripts. He states in fact that the Sikhs had never before become the subject of a historical account.¹⁸ Then, how was any writer in the 1780s to get information on the Sikhs? Buddh Singh's answer is quite explicit: from those of his contemporaries who were supposed to have some knowledge of the happenings.¹⁹

Browne found the *Risāla* 'extremely defective in a regular continuation of dates, and therefore not deserving the name of a history'.²⁰ To a modern historian of the Sikhs, the historical knowledge of the authors of the *Risāla* appears to be 'very poor indeed'.²¹

We may now turn to the account of Guru Tegh Bahadur given in the *Risāla* :²²

17. Ganda Singh, *Early European Accounts*, 13.

18. This is stated by Buddh Singh on the very first page of his work.

19. *Loc. cit.*

20. *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sicks* (Ganda Singh, *Early European Accounts*), 13.

21. Ganda Singh, *Early European Accounts*, 6-7.

22. *Risāla Dar Ahwāl-i-Nānak Shāh Darvesh*, SHR 433, Khalsa College, Amritsar, 2-4.

Guru Ram Rai received the gift (of *gaddī*) from Guru Arjan, and from Ram Rai this position was obtained by Guru Har Rai. After Har Rai came the turn of Hari Sri Krishan. Till his time (the *gurūs*) had been like *darveshes* in dress and manners, and even today the custom among the descendants of Guru Nanak is the same. They did not entertain enmity towards any one and lived as *faqīrs*, like the *bairāgīs* and the *raushanīas*.

In A. H. 1093, in the reign of Aurangzeb, a son was born in the house of Guru Hari Sri Krishan. He was named Tegh Bahadur. When he came of age he was adorned with the qualities of penance and devotion. His disciples used to call him the true king (*sachchā pātshāh*). Guru Tegh Bahadur used to keep an open kitchen (*langar*) for all his followers and visitors with the help of offerings received from all directions. On that account a crowd of people gathered around him.

The news-writers of the province of Lahore reported this matter to the Emperor who had gone to the Deccan for settling its affairs. Since the Emperor was very fond of testing the powers of working a miracle, he appointed special messengers to present Guru Tegh Bahadur at the court.

In accordance with the imperial order, Guru Tegh Bahadur left the place of his residence for the imperial court. The Emperor called him to his presence and demanded a miracle. Guru Tegh Bahadur submitted that he was a mere *faqīr*, immersed in the remembrance of God; he did not have any miracles to perform. The Emperor then asked why he was called 'the true king' and why his name was *Tegh Bahādur* (Master of the Sword). Guru Tegh Bahadur replied that whatever he was, or he had, was a gift from God. He was not concerned with fame or worldly honour. When the Emperor saw that Guru Tegh Bahadur could not work a miracle, he ordered the Guru to be put to death.

At this time a person called Mardana was present with Guru Tegh Bahadur. He asked the Guru's permission to turn the entire world topsy turvy through a prayer. Guru Tegh Bahadur, remembering his father's advice at the time of his departure that a truly holyman should give up his life rather than the secret of God's power, replied that time had not yet come for such an

action. In due course, God would punish the guilty. A brave man would appear to avenge all atrocities.

On the spot where Guru Tegh Bahadur was killed in the Deccan a very impressive structure has been raised. It is a famous place of worship. After Guru Tegh Bahadur's death, his wife, who was carrying a child at that time, gave birth to a son who was named Gobind Singh.

In this brief account, Buddh Singh is making glaring mistakes. The successor of Guru Arjan in this account is not Guru Hargobind but Ram Rai. Tegh Bahadur, who was actually the younger brother of Guru Harkrishan's grandfather, is mentioned as the son of Guru Harkrishan. Aurangzeb called Guru Tegh Bahadur to the Deccan; and it was in the Deccan that he was executed. Guru Gobind Singh is presented in this account as a posthumous child. However, these gross errors of fact reflect only the opinions of those whom Buddh Singh consulted regarding the Sikh past. In his account, thus, we find what some of his contemporaries believed about Guru Tegh Bahadur.

Some elements of the late eighteenth century tradition regarding Guru Tegh Bahadur, as we find them in Buddh Singh's account, may be noted. Guru Tegh Bahadur was called *sachchā pātshāh* by his disciples; he kept an open kitchen and had a very large number of followers; the news-writers sent reports to the Emperor; the Emperor demanded a miracle and the Guru refused to perform one; the Emperor wanted an explanation for the name *Tegh Bahādur* (which was suggestive of temporal ambition) and the Guru explained it in terms which refuted the charge of political ambition; a disciple of the Guru

offered to destroy the world through his supernatural power but the Guru did not allow him to do so; however, a prophecy was made about avenging the wrongs, in God's good time.

2

KHĀLSANĀMA

Bakht Mal tells us at the beginning of his work that his ambition in life was to lay a fresh foundation of Sikh history. In the time of Bhai Lal Singh, the Chief of Kaithal, he prepared two drafts, one short and the other detailed. The short version was taken away by John Malcolm and the detailed one was stolen by thieves when the author was only half way through it. This loss did not diminish his zeal. He prepared a new draft, which was neither too short nor too long, and gave it the name of *Khālsanāma*.

How did he collect information for the *Khālsanāma*? Bakht Mal tells us himself: 'The Sikhs have written very little. There is a large number of religious books but books relating to other branches of knowledge are wanting among them. Even their leaders do not possess much scholarship. The *udāsīs* and the *nirmalas* are an exception but even they know very little about the early founders and they have committed very little to writing. In writing the present work the author has not been able to find any manuscript or other source material. His account of the Sikhs is based on the testimony of trustworthy Sikhs.²³ Thus, what we may expect to find in the

23. *Khālsanāma*, SHR 1659, Khalsa College, Amritsar, 12-13.

Khālsanāma on Guru Tegh Bahadur is what Bakht Mal heard from his contemporary Sikhs.

We may now turn to his account of Guru Tegh Bahadur :²⁴

On Friday, 14th of the bright half of Chet Sammat 1721, Guru Harkrishan died of small-pox. Since at the time of his death he himself had no children, his disciples asked him as to whom they were to regard as their Guru after him. He replied, 'the *Bābā* Bakāla'. Bakāla is a village in the Bārī Doāb. The duration of Harkrishan's pontificate was 2 years 5 months and 19 days. The disciples who had heard of the new successor started on a journey in search of him. The village in question was full of descendants of the Gurus. The followers of Guru Harkrishan discussed among themselves the problem of finding out the true *Bābā* of Bakāla from amongst a number of claimants. One of them had vowed to offer 500 rupees to the Guru ; he suggested that he would offer a little to every claimant and the true successor should discover and demand the full amount vowed. The rest of his companions liked the idea and on a particular day they invited all the *sāhibzādas* to one place. The person concerned started making small offers to each one of them. He did so for Guru Tegh Bahadur also who was present among them. Guru Tegh Bahadur caught hold of his hand and asked why he was offering so little after having vowed so much. The disciple in question told his companions that he had discovered the *Bābā* of Bakāla, and offered the entire amount to Guru Tegh Bahadur. Then they unanimously asked him to sit on the *gaddī*.

When Tegh Bahadur became the Guru, the number of his disciples increased very much and his affairs prospered. He used to live in majestic grandeur. He was a person of liberal attitudes.

24. *Khālsanāma* 11-13. Before taking up the account given here Bakht Mal refers to Guru Tegh Bahadur's mother Nanaki and to his brothers Gurditta, Ani Rai, Attal Rai and Surat Singh. Bakht Mal also adds that Ani Rai and Attal Rai died without children and Surat Singh and Tegh Bahadur took refuge in the hills with their father, Guru Hargobind.

Whatever came by way of offering from his followers was spent and nothing was stored. The name of his wife was Gujri and his son's name was Gobind Singh who, by the time was 15 years old, had mastered all the branches of knowledge.

When Aurangzeb heard of the reputation of Guru Tegh Bahadur he called him to Delhi. Officials of the Government encaged him. The Guru knew of their evil intention but did not pay any heed to them. Unruffled he marched towards Delhi. When he reached Delhi, his disciples welcomed him and offered him large sums of money. The Guru did not care for the riches. When the Emperor heard of the Guru's generosity and his indifference to wealth, he felt perturbed. He asked the Guru to work a miracle. The Guru replied that *karāmāt* was a secret between the gnostic and his God. The Guru then added that no sword would be effective against his body. The Emperor was very angry over this and ordered that the Guru should be put to death near the *kotwālī*.

The Sikhs maintain that the executioner did not get the chance to strike the Guru. On Guru Tegh Bahadur's own suggestion, a Sikh who was present there separated the Guru's head from his body. A *faqīr* passed by the body of the Guru and remarked that the Emperor had not done well; a curse would fall and the city of Delhi would be desolate. The Sikhs took the head of Guru Tegh Bahadur to Anandpur. His body was cremated in Rakābganj.

The places where the Guru suffered a martyr's death and where his body and his head were cremated have become the places of pilgrimage for his followers. Sardar Baghel Singh persuaded Ali Gauhar to grant the revenues of Piplī in the *pargana* of Kharkhuda, attached to the territory of Delhi, for the maintenance of the persons who looked after these places of worship. He himself granted a daily allowance of one rupee for the said purpose. Notwithstanding the passage of time these grants have remained intact to this day.

The death of Guru Tegh Bahadur took place on the bright

half of Maghar in Sammat 1732. The duration of his pontificate was 10 years 7 months and 21 days.

In this account of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Bakht Mal gives precise dates for the death of Guru Harkrishan and Guru Tegh Bahadur, and exact durations for their pontificates. This precision and exactitude does not spring from any written sources, as he has told us already; this information too was obtained from the contemporary Sikhs. The only point that he makes on the basis of verifiable evidence is the one about the sacred structures at Anandpur and Delhi for which Sardar Baghel Singh granted revenue-free land and daily allowance. For the rest, Bakht Mal reproduces the various elements of Sikh tradition as it was current during the early nineteenth century. We may take note of these elements : the Sikhs asked Guru Harkrishan at the time of his death about his successor and he replied 'the *Bābā* at *Bakāla*'; some Sikhs from Delhi went to *Bakāla* to identify the new Guru; at *Bakāla* there were several claimants; Tegh Bahadur was indentified as the true successor because he could divine the full amount of offering vowed by a Sikh; the number of Guru Tegh Bahadur's disciples increased enormously; he maintained an open kitchen; he lived in grandeur; reports reached Aurangzeb regarding the influence of Guru Tegh Bahadur; summoned by Aurangzeb, he went to Delhi; the Emperor demanded a miracle and the Guru refused, on the grounds that God's secret was not to be betrayed; Guru Tegh Bahadur claimed that no sword would be effective against his body; Aurangzeb ordered his execution; a *faqīr* prophesied the desola-

tion of Delhi. Bakht Mal also reproduces the belief of the Sikhs whom he consulted that Guru Tegh Bahadur did not give the executioner a chance to strike him; a disciple was asked to do so as an act of service.

3

TAWĀRĪKH-I-SIKHĀN

Khushwaqt Rai tells us that he was employed as an intelligencer in the Panjab when Colonel Ochterlony asked him to collect information on the history of the Sikhs. Like other employees in his position, he did that and gave to his work the title of *Tawārīkh-i-Sikhān-i-Mulk-i-Panjāb wā Mālwa*.²⁵ It was completed in A.D. 1811-12 at Batala in the upper Bārī Doāb.²⁶

Apart from the general statement that writers collect required information from whomsoever they can, Khushwaqt Rai does not say anything about the sources of his information. Nor does he refer to any earlier work. It may be useful, therefore, to compare his account of Guru Tegh Bahadur with the one given by Bakht Mal. The account given by Khushwaqt Rai is as follows :²⁷

It so happened that Guru Harkrishan was attacked by small-pox. Knowing that there was no hope against the fatal affliction,

25. This information is given by Khushwaqt Rai at the beginning and the end of his work.

26. Khushwaqt Rai's narrative closes in June, 1811, and one manuscript is dated Sammat 1869 (A. D. 1812). See also Ganda Singh, *A Select Bibliography of the Sikhs and Sikhism*, Amritsar 1965, 302.

27. *Tawārīkh-i-Sikhān-i-Panjāb wā Mulk-i-Mālwa*, SHR 1274, Khalsa College Amritsar, 28-31.

his devoted followers asked him at the time of his death about the person who would succeed to his exalted position. He could only say '*Bābā at Bakāla*'. The disciples present there did not catch this suggestive hint that the Guru was to be found in the village named Bakāla. Having spontaneously uttered these words, Guru Harkrishan died of the illness he had been suffering from. This happened in Sammat 1721.

Not knowing the import of the words '*Bābā at Bakāla*', the devoted disciples of the Guru were left wondering for some time. The seat of honour (the *gaddī* of Guruship) remained vacant for a few months. All the descendants of Guru Hargobind were claimant to the position, and each one of them was hoping to be accepted as the Guru of the Sikhs. At this time a trader, who was a follower of Guru Nanak, was searching for the Guru. Having prayed to him for safety in a certain predicament he had vowed to offer five hundred rupees to the Guru. Through God's grace and by the sincerity of his faith he had escaped with his life and property intact. But now he could not find the Guru. He decided to accept the claimant who would demand the full amount vowed by him as the true Guru. Fortunately he turned up in Bakāla. Tegh Bahadur was living there, like men absorbed in the love of God. This trader went to his place of residence. Immediately at his sight Tegh Bahadur demanded the five hundred rupees vowed by him. The man climbed to the top of the house and cried aloud to inform the faithful that he had discovered the true Guru. He invited them all to offer homage to the Guru. The faithful and the elect among them requested Guru Tegh Bahadur to forsake his obscurity. With the help of Bhai Buddha they seated him on the *gaddī* which belonged to him by right and celebrated him as their Guru. They served him with devotion so that the affairs may be set right. To render service to the Guru was an act of piety and religious merit for them.

In every province of the Empire a *masand*, an agent, was supposed to collect offerings from the followers of the Guru. Articles of fine quality, besides offering in cash, used to come to the Guru from every quarter. His affairs prospered and he

used to receive abundant supplies of cash and kind, including large numbers of elephants and horses. He resided mostly at Anandpur-Makhowal in the hills.

Seeing the large number of the Guru's retinue and his prosperity, some of his disciples started talking in terms of his temporal authority. They called him the true king (*sachchā pātshāh*). Aurangzeb heard of the Guru's pomp and grandeur. He called him to the court to test his spiritual powers by asking for a miracle. Guru Tegh Bahadur accepted the inevitability of things and reached Delhi.

In those days Jai Singh Sawāī was also in Delhi. He had firm faith in Guru Tegh Bahadur. The Emperor had to send at the time a campaign against the Raja of Rāikātī who had rebelled on the assumption of the impregnability of his fort. Raja Jai Singh was chosen for the campaign. He secured the Emperor's permission to take Guru Tegh Bahadur with him. On the way the Guru bestowed a sword and a *khil'at* upon Raja Jai Singh. The sword is still an object of veneration with his descendants. After several halts the Raja encamped at Banares and there the Guru constructed a *dharmśāla*. Then he proceeded to Patna and lodged his family in a new building constructed for the purpose. During this very journey he got buildings constructed in Dacca and Māldī also. When they encamped in the territory of Rāikātī, the rebel Raja tried to divert a stream in the direction of the camp. It is believed that water did not run in that direction. The rebel Raja was so impressed by this that he became a follower of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Also, he paid the tribute due to the Emperor. At this time Guru Tegh Bahadur heard the good tidings of the birth of his son. He was named Gobind Singh. After making a success of the campaign, Raja Jai Singh returned to Delhi.

A few years after this Guru Tegh Bahadur was summoned by the Emperor and he came to Delhi along with his family. He sent his family to Anandpur but himself stayed in Delhi. One day the Emperor persisted in demanding a miracle from Guru Tegh Bahadur. The Emperor was desirous of converting all the

Hindus to Islam. On the other hand Guru Tegh Bahadur used to say that his mission was to uphold his faith which was distinct from the religions of both the Hindus and the Muslims. Knowing that self-sacrifice was unavoidable on account of this, he agreed to perform a miracle : he asserted that no sword would be effective against him. When the sword struck him, his head was severed from his body. A piece of paper was found tied on his neck with the following words : 'the man of God gave up his head but not the secret of God'. The Emperor felt sorry for his unjust death.

It is related that when the Emperor asked Guru Tegh Bahadur to work a miracle, some of his followers forsook him on account of weakness of faith. Some sweepers, who were strong in their faith in the Guru, stuck to him. He had asked one of them not to let his head roll on the ground. Consequently, he caught the Guru's head in his lap the moment it fell from his body. Running day and night he carried the head to Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur. It was cremated with fragrant wood. And then Guru Gobind Singh observed mourning for the death of his father.

None dared remove the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur from the Chandni Chauk for cremation without explicit orders from the Emperor. A *banjāra* follower of Guru Nanak, who was bringing his grain-laden bullocks from that side, put the body of the Guru in a sack, took it out of the city and cremated it. The people of the city felt extremely distressed by this whole episode which turned their days dark like nights.

Guru Tegh Bahadur left this earthly life for the eternal abode on Maghar Sudī 5 in Sammat 1732. His pontificate lasted 10 years, 2 months and 21 days.

In this account, Khushwaqt Rai gives a specific year for Guru Harkrishan's death, a precise date for the death of Guru Tegh Bahadur and an exact duration for his pontificate. Such precision and exactitude, as we have seen in the case of Bakht Mal,

is no proof of dependence on written records. There are some other elements also in this account which are there in the account given by Bakht Mal : at the time of Guru Harkrishan's death he was asked about his successor and he replied 'the *Bābā* at Bakāla'; at Bakāla there were several claimants; Tegh Bahadur was identified as the true successor when he divined the exact offering vowed by a Sikh; Guru Tegh Bahadur used to live in grandeur; reports were sent to the Emperor, and he summoned the Guru to the court; at Delhi, the Emperor demanded a miracle; Guru Tegh Bahadur claimed that no sword would be effective against him but, when tried, his head was severed from his body; the head of Guru Tegh Bahadur was cremated at Anandpur and his torso at Delhi. In the presentation of these common elements the variation is only slight.

However, there are some other elements in the account given by Khushwaqt Rai which are not there in the account given by Bakht Mal. The most important of these is the episode of Raja Jai Singh's intercession with Aurangzeb on behalf of Guru Tegh Bahadur. The travels of Guru Tegh Bahadur in the eastern provinces of the Mughal Empire, flow as a corollary from that intercession. As a result, a new dimension could be added to the pontificate of Guru Tegh Bahadur. The sequence of events changes meaningfully : nomination followed by popularity, followed by summons to Delhi, followed by intercession and travels to the east, and trial after several years. However, Khushwaqt Rai does make much of this new element. He does not try to see any

significant connection between the various elements he puts together. For example, he emphasizes the temporal majesty and resources of Guru Tegh Bahadur at the outset but ignores its relevance for his trial and execution; the reason given for the execution is Aurangzeb's desire to see a miracle.

Khushwaqt Rai's apparent indifference to causal connections may be a reflection of the piecemeal collection of his information. In any case there are some mistakes in his account of Guru Tegh Bahadur which could be made only if oral authority was blindly followed. Bhai Buddha is stated to have installed Guru Tegh Bahadur on the *gaddī*. Now, Bhai Buddha was a disciple of Guru Nanak, and notwithstanding the unusually long life given to him by the Sikh tradition, he had died in the early seventeenth century. The third and fourth paragraphs of Khushwaqt Rai's account suggest that his informant was confusing Guru Tegh Bahadur with Guru Gobind Singh.

The statement that some of the followers of Guru Tegh Bahadur forsook him at the time of his trial, though plausible in terms of common psychology, has no stronger basis than the testimony of his own contemporaries. The way in which the head and torso of Guru Tegh Bahadur were removed from the Chandni Chauk presents only one contemporary version among others. On the whole, there is nothing in the account presented by Khushwaqt Rai that is based on an earlier written record. His approach and method is very similar to that of Bakht Mal.

4

UMDAT UT-TAWĀRĪKH

Sohan Lal's *Umdat ut-Tawārīkh* is a voluminous work. To the historian of Ranjit Singh it is by far the most important chronicle. However, to diary contemporary events is not the same thing as to reconstruct past happenings. The value of Sohan Lal's work for the period of Ranjit Singh should not mislead us to assume its value or credibility for the earlier periods also. Let us read his account of Guru Tegh Bahadur :²⁸

At the time of Guru Harkrishan's death, a large number of his faithful and sincere disciples, both men and women, came to see him. The holy mother and other well-wishers submitted to Guru Harkrishan that he may indicate who should adorn the *masnad* of Guruship after him. Guru Harkrishan replied that the *Bābā* in Bakāla would be his successor and all his followers should offer their allegiance to him and derive benefit from his great qualities. After this conversation Guru Harkrishan died.

Praise rightly belongs to God who brought into being all the creation from nothingness and made man the best of his creation. In a trice He brings thousands men into existence; in a moment, he returns them to nothingness. Verse :

The wise wonder at the existence of nothingness and the nothingness of existence. Words cannot express this ineffable phenomenon and one's duty is to remain silent.

The revered Mother and the devoted followers of the Guru left Shāhjahānābād for Bakāla in search of the Guru. Bakāla is

28. *Umdat ut-Tawārīkh*, Lahore 1885, 47-53.

Before we come to the account translated here, Sohan Lal refers to the imprisonment and execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur in Shāhjahānābād in A. H. 1051, corresponding to the 17th year of Aurangzeb's reign, in accordance with the orders of the Emperor. The duration of the pontificate is given as fifteen years (*pānzdah sāl*) but it could be a misprint for eleven (*yāzdah*).

a village in the Bist Jālandhar Doāb. After many a halt they reached Bakāla. At this time a follower of the Guru, named Makhan Shah, also appeared in Bakāla with 300 rupees to offer as a *nazr* to the Guru. Every one belonging to the house of the Guru had come to Bakāla and claimed himself to be the true successor. In this situation, Makhan Shah suggested that every claimant may take his seat on a cot so that he may offer something as *nazr* to every one. All of them sat on cots and Makhan Shah started offering one rupee each in the hope that the true Guru would ask for the full amount and, thus, reveal himself to be the protector of his devotees. On being approached by Makhan Shah, Guru Tegh Bahadur asked for the full amount of 300 rupees, saying that this being the amount vowed he should not be reluctant now to offer it. Makhan Shah was overjoyed to hear these words and offered 300 rupees to Guru Tegh Bahadur. And he proclaimed loudly to the followers that he had discovered the true Guru, the *Bābā* of Bakāla, and invited them to pay homage to him for their own spiritual benefit. They all turned to Guru Tegh Bahadur and offered homage to him.

Guru Tegh Bahadur went to the country of Malwa and stayed there to give instruction to his followers in a befitting manner.

With the passage of time thousands of soldiers and horsemen used to be with him; camels and goods of all kinds remained at his disposal. Furthermore, those who were refractory towards the *‘āmil*s, the *zamīndars*, the *ijāradārs*, the *dīwāns* and the officials in general used to take refuge with Guru Tegh Bahadur. Regardless of the number of people present with the Guru, they were all fed by him.

Pain inevitably follows comfort. Some degraded persons reported to Emperor Alamgir that Guru Tegh Bahadur was staying in the country of Malwa with thousands of soldiers and horsemen; whosoever was refractory towards the officials took refuge with him. They warned the Emperor that if no notice of the Guru was taken he would bean incitement to insurrection; if he was allowed to continue his activities for a long time, it would be extremely difficult to deal with him. Verse :

A piece of stone may be enough to stop a stream at its source. But once it starts flowing it does not allow even an elephant to pass through it.

Upon this, the Emperor sent towards Guru Tegh Bahadur experienced soldiers, instructing them to bring the Guru to Shāhjahānābād. They hastened to deliver the Emperor's message : the Emperor desired a miracle from the Guru; he should lose no time in presenting himself to the Emperor so that the manifestation of his spiritual powers should make him famous everywhere. The Guru replied that he was a *faqīr* who had renounced worldly ambition and was contented with obscure existence; he did not wish to associate himself with the *amīrs*. The messengers of the Emperor insisted that Guru Tegh Bahadur should accompany them to Shāhjahānābād and, eventually, succeeded in taking him to the imperial court.

The Emperor was extremely anxious to witness a miracle. He asked Guru Tegh Bahadur to present himself. During the meeting the Emperor asked Guru Tegh Bahadur why the name '*tegh bahādur*' had been adopted by him. The Guru replied that his name was actually '*degh bahādur*', but the common people wrongly pronounced it Tegh Bahadur. The significance of the words *degh bahādur*, he further amplified, was that his followers derived comfort from the open kitchen maintained by him.

The Emperor asked Guru Tegh Bahadur to show a miracle since he was one of the *walīs* of God and was regarded to be one of the foremost among the gnostics. He also added that, after witnessing a miracle, he would himself submit to the Guru. The Guru replied that to work a miracle was to invite the wrath of God; therefore, the true men of God did not reveal such powers. The Emperor very much insisted that Guru Tegh Bahadur should work a miracle, but the Guru persisted in refusing. The Emperor ordered the Guru to be placed in confinement until he worked a miracle.

In the eyes of godly men, a prison is no different from any other place. They stick to their position and no change in circumstances can induce them to deviate from the straight path.

Verse :

Stick to one position like a mountain so that the wind does not move you. Man is a handful of dust and human life is like wind.

Accordingly, Guru Tegh Bahadur regarded the prison better than a garden and spent his days remembering God.

One day some of his devoted followers, who were present with him, asked Guru Tegh Bahadur why he had resigned himself to the life of prison and did not express any wish to escape. One of them added that if he was allowed by the Guru he would destroy the Emperor and his capital in no time. Guru Tegh Bahadur asked him where from he had received so much power. He replied that it was all due to the grace of the Guru. Guru Tegh Bahadur praised him for his courage and took his hand into his own. As a result the power which he possessed was taken back by the Guru. The disciple was dazed (by the Guru's power).

The Emperor's men were insisting daily on the performance of a miracle as a condition of the Guru's release. With equal persistence Guru Tegh Bahadur kept silent. Then Guru Tegh Bahadur received the news that his son had ascended the *gaddī* of Guruship in his place. He was very happy over this and he now prophesied that the destruction of the Emperor would take place before long. Also he wrote the following *dohrā* to his son :

Gone is all strength and the body is in bonds. There is no remedy.
You are my only refuge O Lord ! Succour me as you once did
the Elephant.

In reply to this *dohrā*, the son of Guru Tegh Bahadur returned the following :

All strength is revived and bonds are snapped asunder and remedy
is found when the Lord Himself comes to succour. Every thing
is in His hands.

Guru Tegh Bahadur became very cheerful when he heard this from his son and decided then to sacrifice himself.

The Emperor's men became more and more insistent on the performance of a miracle and, at last, Guru Tegh Bahadur suggested that he would write something on a piece of paper for

them so that if a person tied it on his neck, he would be proof against all kinds of weapons. He suggested further that he would tie this piece on his own neck and an experienced soldier could then try his sword on it so that the truth of his claim is established. And then, he tied the piece of paper on his neck and challenged them to try a sword on him. When the sword was struck his head was severed from his body. The bright day of comfort turned into the dark night of pain. All was grief and sorrow. Every one thought that Guru Tegh Bahadur had used this subterfuge to escape the cruelty of the Emperor's men. It is related by all and sundry that a gnostic passed by and prophesied that dire calamity would visit the Empire before long.

The Emperor ordered the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur to be kept guarded in the Chandni Chauk ; and no one was to be allowed to come near it. Afterwards, he ordered his men to remove the piece of paper from Guru Tegh Bahadur's neck in order to see what was written on that. What was written on the piece of paper was : 'Not the secret but the head was given up'. The Emperor was nonplussed. All the men and women of Shāhjahānābād were deeply grieved. Verse :

Alas ! the days of youth are gone and gone is the spring of life.
I do not know the bird whose nest was in the heart from where it
came and where it has gone.

Guru Tegh Bahadur remained on the *gaddī* for 10 years 7 months and 21 days. He died in Shāhjahānābād after mid-day on Maghar Sudī 5, Sammat 1732,...

Guru Gobind Singh informed his followers that his abode would be in Anandpur and after many a halt they all reached there. There, he told them that he would appreciate the services of one who should bring the body of his father from Shāhjahānābād. Two low-caste men, the father and the son, volunteered for this. They gave Guru Gobind Singh a solemn assurance that they would do everything to render this particular service to the Guru. They were allowed to do so. They travelled to Shāhjahānābād and they found that the Emperor's men were guarding the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur day and night without relaxing their vigilance for a moment. They thought of devising a plan for

recovering the body. Luckily, a follower of the Guru was a charioteer with a certain *amīr*. He used to take his horses for exercise every day, covering a distance of 30 to 40 *kos*. These men met the charioteer and told him the purpose of their visit. The charioteer suggested that if they could manage to place the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur in the chariot, he would take it to Anandpur. Before long, a rain storm came and the night was extraordinarily dark. The Emperor's men took shelter from the lashing storm at some distance from the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur. The two men took advantage of this situation. The son killed his own father and replaced the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur with that of his father. The body of Guru Tegh Bahadur was placed in the chariot. In the morning the chariot started for Anandpur. Guru Gobind Singh was glad to see the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur and thanked God for His kindness. He declared at this time that all Ranghretas were the sons of the Guru.

Guru Gobind Singh ordered the Ranghreta to ask for a boon. Whatever he wished would be granted. The Ranghreta submitted that he may be allowed to bathe in *Srī Amritsar*. Guru Gobind Singh granted the request. The followers present on this occasion submitted to Guru Gobind Singh that it had been customary for *brahmans* and *khatrīs* only to bathe in *Srī Amritsar* and if the Ranghretas were allowed, disorder might result. So far as they were concerned, they added, they were wholly obedient to the wishes of the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh told them that a separate *bungā* would be constructed for the Ranghretas. The *bungā* of the Ranghretas is now there in the south of *Srī Amritsar*, close to Dukhbhanjani. The Ranghretas go there and bathe. Since that day, the Ranghretas have become intimately connected with the followers of Guru Gobind Singh.

In this account of Guru Tegh Bahadur, a precise date is given for his death and an exact duration for his pontificate. In the light of our understanding of Bakht Mal's position on this point this precision and exactitude may be taken as a proof of his dependence

on contemporary Sikhs for his information. Sohan Lal Suri quotes two *dohrās*, one by Guru Tegh Bahadur and the other by Guru Gobind Singh, the latter written in response to the former. These *dohrās* are to be found in the *Ādī Granth*.²⁹ The inclusion of these verses in Sohan Lal's account further underlines his dependence on contemporary Sikhs.

Indeed, many elements of the Sikh tradition found in Bakht Mal's account are there in Sohan Lal's account also : the Sikhs asked Guru Harkrishan at the time of his death about his successor and he replied 'the *Bābā* at *Bakāla*'; some Sikhs from Delhi went to *Bakāla* to offer homage to the nominated Guru but there were several claimants at *Bakāla*; Tegh Bahadur was identified by Makhan Shah as the true successor when he divined the full amount of offering vowed by Makhan Shah; the number of Guru Tegh Bahadur's followers increased immensely; he kept an open kitchen for all; reports were sent to Aurangzeb, deliberately suggesting that he was a potential danger; summoned by Aurangzab, Guru Tegh Bahadur went to Delhi; the Emperor insisted on a miracle and the Guru refused to work one ; ultimately he claimed that no sword would be effective against him but, when tried, it proved to be mortal; a *faqīr* prophesied dire calamity for the Empire.

There are only a few additional statements in Sohan Lal's account. Guru Tegh Bahadur tied on his neck a piece of paper on which were inscribed the

29. On page 1429, these two *dohrās* are given as *sloks* 53 and 54 of Guru Tegh Bahadur. And the latter *dohrā* is popularly attributed to Guru Gobind Singh.

words 'not the secret but the head was given up'. The body of Guru Tegh Bahadur was taken to Anandpur by a Ranghreta who killed his own father and left the corpse in place of the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur. As a reward for this service, the Ranghretas in general came to have a *bungā* of their own at Amritsar. The significance of these statements for the pontificate of Guru Tegh Bahadur is rather marginal even if they were based on some written record. But if Sohan Lal did not consult written records for the bulk of his information we may be sure that he would not have consulted any written record for this additional information. Sohan Lal's mistakes support this impression : he places Bakāla in the Jālandhar Doāb; he locates the entire pontificate of Guru Tegh Bahadur in the Malwa; he does not know that only the head of Guru Tegh Bahadur was taken to Anandpur for cremation. Obviously Sohan Lal did not make an effort to collect all the elements of Sikh tradition current in his own day.

5

ZIKR-I-GURUĀN WA IBTIDĀ-I-SINGHĀN

We may now turn to the account of Guru Tegh Bahadur given by Ahmad Shah :³⁰

At the time of his death Guru Harkrishan had referred to the *Bābā* at Bakāla (as his successor). Bakāla is close to Goindwal. Makhan Shah, one of the merchants of Delhi, went there, discovered Tegh Bahadur and declared him to be the Guru. The other Sodhīs were jealous enough to become the enemies of Guru

30. Appendix to *Umdat ut-Tawārīkh*, Lahore 1885, 4-5.

Tegh Bahadur. When Makhan Shah again arrived from Delhi to pay homage to the Guru, he denounced the Sodhīs in their very presence. Nevertheless Guru Tegh Bahadur suggested that it was advisable for him to move to Delhi because the Sodhīs were extremely hostile to him. Makhan Shah agreed and took the Guru to Delhi along with the members of his household.

Some of the *amīrs* informed the Emperor that Guru Tegh Bahadur had taken up residence in the Muhalla of the Sawāīs. The Emperor ordered the Guru to be brought before him. A Sawālī courtier (*nadīm*) of the Emperor interceded on behalf of the Guru. The Emperor had appointed him to lead a campaign and he submitted that if Guru Tegh Bahadur was allowed to go with him he would bring the Guru back and present him to the Emperor. Consequently, taking his family with him Guru Tegh Bahadur went to visit places of pilgrimage. When he reached Patna his wife, named Gujri, gave birth to a son who was named Gobind Rai. Afterwards, Guru Tegh Bahadur returned to Delhi. When Ram Rai came to know of his return, he made a representation to the Emperor. Guru Tegh Bahadur felt insecure and one night left Delhi to take shelter with the Raja of Kahlur. In his territories, there was a piece of land known as Devi Makho which had never been inhabited. Guru Tegh Bahadur purchased it from the Raja of Kahlur for five hundred rupees for habilitation. He founded a village and gave it the name of Makhawal.

When the son of Guru Tegh Bahadur was 14 years old, some of the *amīrs* in Delhi made a representation to the Emperor that the Guru might be called to Delhi. In this helpless situation Guru Tegh Bahadur decided to sacrifice his life. He nominated his son as his successor and made him wear the arms of Guru Hargobind. He embraced his son and said a few words of advice. He bade farewell to his relations. Then he started for Delhi. On reaching Delhi, he was imprisoned at the suggestion of Ram Rai. Guru Tegh Bahadur wrote something on a piece of paper, tied it on his neck and claimed that no sword could be effective against his body. However, when the sword was struck to test his claim, his head was

severed. What was written on the paper was this : *sar diya aur sirr na diya* (not the secret, but the head was given).

Guru Tegh Bahadur's head was taken by Makhan Shah to his own house and kept there. This happened in Sammat 1732 on Maghar Sudī 5. His pontificate lasted 10 years, 7 months and 21 days.

When the news of Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution reached Guru Gobind Singh, he was immersed in sorrow. He collected his disciples and addressed them as follows :

They have executed my father in Delhi. I shall surely take revenge for the death of my father. His body has been kept in concealment. Is there any one amongst you (who can go to Delhi and bring the Guru's body to Makhawal) ?

A man stood up in response and left for Delhi. He stayed in the house of Makhan Shah and brought the body of the Guru to his house and entrusted it to him. He himself took the head to Guru Gobind Singh. The day following Makhan Shah submitted to the Emperor that one of the disciples of Guru Tegh Bahadur had entrusted his body to him and had taken the head with him. The Emperor ordered that the body should be cremated according to Hindu custom. Makhan Shah did precisely that. He also raised a structure on the spot where Guru Tegh Bahadur's body was cremated. It is close to the *samādh* of Guru Harkrishan. The head of Guru Tegh Bahadur reached Makhawal. Guru Gobind Singh wept bitterly before it was cremated. A structure was raised over the spot in Makhawal.

In this account Ahmad Shah refers to the nomination of Guru Tegh Bahadur by Guru Harkrishan as his successor. He refers also to the identification of Tegh Bahadur at Bakāla by Makhan Shah, but without mentioning the way in which it was done. Ahmad Shah refers to intercession by a Rajput noble when Aurangzeb summoned the Guru to his presence in Delhi. As a result of this intercession Guru Tegh Bahadur accompanied the Rajput noble on a campaign.

Once again, however, the Guru was summoned to Delhi (and asked to work a miracle); he tied a piece of paper on his neck, asserting that no sword shall be effective against him but when tried, his head was severed from his body. On the piece of paper were inscribed the words 'not the secret but the head was given up'. The head of Guru Tegh Bahadur was taken to Guru Gobind Singh (at Makhawal) and cremated there. His torso was cremated at Delhi, close to the *samādh* of Guru Harkrishan. Ahmad Shah also gives a precise date for the death of the Guru and an exact duration for his pontificate. We are familiar with all these elements of the contemporary tradition regarding Guru Tegh Bahadur.

However, there are certain other elements in Ahmad Shah's account. When Tegh Bahadur was declared Guru at Bakāla, the other Sodhīs became his bitter enemies and Guru Tegh Bahadur moved to Delhi with his family. Representation against Guru Tegh Bahadur was made by some nobles at Delhi. On his return from Patna, representation against him was made by Ram Rai; but Guru Tegh Bahadur succeeded in leaving Delhi before any action was taken against him. He purchased a piece of land from the chief of Kahlur and founded Makhawal. On representation made once more by some nobles, Guru Tegh Bahadur was summoned to Delhi and, knowing that he shall have to sacrifice his life, he installed his fourteen years old son Gobind Singh on the *gaddī* before leaving for Delhi. There, he was imprisoned on the suggestion of Ram Rai. The person who brought Guru Tegh Bahadur's head from Delhi in response to Guru

Gobind Singh's call had contacted Makhan Shah. Also, Makhan Shah arranged the cremation of Guru Tegh Bahadur's torso at Delhi. All these elements point to Sikh oral tradition as Ahmad Shah's source rather than any earlier written record.

6

TĀRĪKH-I-PANJĀB

Ghulam. Muhiyuddin Butay Shah tells us at the beginning of his Work that he was asked by George Russel Clarke, the Agent of the Governor General for the Panjab, to compile a comprehensive history of the Panjab. He completed this work in the 1840s and gave it the title of *Tārīkh-i-Panjāb*. It is a voluminous history of the Panjab from the earliest times to the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.³¹ Butay Shah's account of Guru Tegh Bahadur's pontificate is also the longest of all. It does not mean, however, that there are many new elements in his account :³²

Guru Tegh Bahadur was born in the house of Guru Hargobind on Friday, the 19th Māgh, in Sammat 1680. His mother's name was Nanaki and the place of his birth was Rāmdāspura. In Sammat 1686, on Assū Sudī 9, he was married to Gujri, the daughter of a Sikh belonging to the town of Kartarpur. After the death of Guru Harkrishan, he ascended the *sajjāda* and the manner in which he succeeded to that position is described below.

At the time of Guru Harkrishan's death at Shāhjahanābād, his followers asked him regarding his successor. Guru Harkrishan replied that the Bābā of Bakāla would sit on the *masnad* after him. Bakāla is a small village adjoining Goindwal. At the time

31. Cf. Ganda Singh, *A Select Bibliography*, 279-80.

32. *Tārīkh-i-Panjāb*, SHR 1288, Khalsa College, Amritsar, 398-400.

of Guru Hargobind's departure for the hills, several of his kith and kin had taken up residence in Bakāla. When the news of what had been said by Guru Harkrishan at the time of his death reached Bakāla, all the Sodhīs who were residing in the village put forth their claims to be the successor of Guru Harkrishan.

Tegh Bahadur was an emancipated man and used to spend his days in seclusion. He did not make even his presence known to the people and he did not make any claim to Guruship. One day a Hindu trader of Delhi, named Makhan Shah, who was a disciple of Guru Hargobind, came to Bakāla with gifts and presents with the idea of offering these to the Sodhī claimants in order to find out the true successor of Guru Harkrishan. He asked every one of them as to what Guru Harkrishan had said at the time of his death. They all replied that Guru Harkrishan had bequeathed the *gaddī* of *gurūship* to the *Bābā* of Bakāla. Having met all the Sodhīs, Makhan Shah went to see Tegh Bahadur. He was impressed by his pious demeanour and holy countenance. Then he told the Sodhīs that they had done something wrong and they were totally mistaken (in their interpretation of Guru Harkrishan's words). Guru Harkrishan's reference to the *Bābā* at Bakāla was, in fact, a reference to Guru Tegh Bahadur. He offered all the presents and gifts he had with him to Guru Tegh Bahadur and acclaimed him as the true Guru.

According to another version, Makhan Shah arrived in Bakāla with 525 Rupees. He saw that every one of the Sodhīs was sitting on a cot, claiming to be the Guru. In dilemma about the true Guru, Makhan Shah thought to himself that he would offer one rupee each and the one to demand the full amount of money would undoubtedly be the true Guru. He did precisely that. When Guru Tegh Bahadur's turn came, he demanded the full amount. Makhan Shah was extremely happy at the miracle and offered the whole amount to Guru Tegh Bahadur. He loudly proclaimed to others that he had discovered the true *Bābā* of Bakāla. The followers of the Guru rushed to him.

In any case when the people came to Guru Tegh Bahadur with the request to ascend the *masnad*, he replied that he was too insignificant to occupy such an august office. Makhan Shah and

the other followers implored him with such vehemence that he agreed to sit on the *masnad*. The arms which Guru Hargobind had given to Guru Tegh Bahadur were brought to him and he was requested to wear them. Guru Tegh Bahadur told them to keep these weapons aside for the time being. He prophesied that another Swordsman would appear and the weapons would be useful to him. Guru Tegh Bahadur's reference was to his own son, Guru Gobind Singh.

After the accession of Guru Tegh Bahadur to the *masnad*, his fame began to spread because of his piety, generosity and his open kitchen. The people were getting attached to him and Guru Tegh Bahadur became pre-eminent among the Sodhīs (who were his collaterals). They became jealous of Guru Tegh Bahadur and thought of getting rid of him. In fact, they even thought of murdering him if they could find the opportunity. During those days Makhan Shah was in Delhi, but having heard of their intentions he came to Bakāla and told the Sodhīs to desist from their evil designs. However, Guru Tegh Bahadur told him in private that the Sodhīs were bound to remain his enemies ; they were bent upon getting rid of him sooner or later. Therefore it would be a better arrangement if Guru Tegh Bahadur also went to Delhi with Makhan Shah.

Ram Rai, the brother of Guru Harkrishan, who used to reside in Delhi, heard of Guru Tegh Bahadur's arrival. He was consumed by jealousy and represented to the Emperor that Guru Tegh Bahadur talked of temporal authority and claimed miraculous powers. He had come to Delhi and was residing in the Muhalla of the Sawāīs; it would be in the interest of the Emperor to call Guru Tegh Bahadur into his presence. The Emperor ordered Guru Tegh Bahadur to be brought before him. One of the Sawāīs who was a *nadīm* of the Emperor was in these very days appointed to lead a campaign. He interceded with the Emperor on behalf of Guru Tegh Bahadur with the remark that the Guru was a *faqīr* and it did not behove the Emperor to molest a *faqīr*. He also added that Guru Tegh Bahadur was desirous of going on pilgrimage and could accompany the Sawāī. On his return Guru Tegh Bahadur could be presented to the Emperor.

In Sammat 1713 Guru Tegh Bahadur went to places of pilgrimage along with his family and followers. When he came to the city (of Patna) his wife named Gujri gave birth to a son. He was named Gobind Rai. Having visited the places of pilgrimage Guru Tegh Bahadur returned to Delhi. Some of the *amīrs* represented to the Emperor that Guru Tegh Bahadur should see him in person as he had then returned to Delhi. The Emperor sent orders that Guru Tegh Bahadur should be brought to the court to work a miracle.

When the news reached Guru Tegh Bahadur, he was distressed. He thought that this was the result of Ram Rai's implacable enmity towards him. He uttered the following words : 'If my own kith and kin can do this, what would not others do' ? Guru Tegh Bahadur left Delhi and took refuge with the *r. jas* of the hills.

In those parts there was a piece of wasteland associated with the name of the goddess Makho. This piece of land was never brought under cultivation. Guru Tegh Bahadur paid 500 rupees for it to the chief of Kahlur and founded a village, naming it Makhawal. He started living there and time passed till his son Gobind Singh became fourteen years old.

In Delhi itself Ram Rai went on instigating the Emperor from time to time against Guru Tegh Bahadur with the suggestion that he should be called to the court and asked to work a miracle. At last the Emperor accepted this suggestion and ordered that Guru Tegh Bahadur should be brought before him. Guru Tegh Bahadur realized that it would not be possible for him to come out alive from the situation and, consequently, he decided to lay down his life. He bade farewell to his family. He embraced his son and told him that he had been called to lay down his life but, since he had a son like Gobind Singh, he was not afraid of his enemies. Guru Tegh Bahadur also told his son that he was to be the Guru after him and he should not forget to avenge his father's death. His head should be brought to Anandpur and the thought of revenge should never be given up. With these and such like instructions Gobind Rai was placed on

the *masnad* and made the successor of Guru Tegh Bahadur. The arms of Guru Hargobind were put on him. Thus entrusting Guru Gobind Singh to God, Guru Tegh Bahadur accompanied the royal horsemen to Delhi. When he reached Delhi, the Emperor imprisoned him at the suggestion of Ram Rai.

According to another version, Guru Tegh Bahadur's fame spread far and wide and a very large number of people became his disciples. He started residing in the Malwa region to preach and to give instruction to his followers. Before long, a large number of soldiers and horsemen collected around him. In fact, whosoever was refractory towards the *'āmil*s and *ijāradār*s of the Government took refuge with the Guru. Thousands of persons used to be in attendance and every one of them received meals from the Guru's kitchen. At this time some of his enemies reported to the Emperor that Guru Tegh Bahadur had collected a large army and numerous men were getting attached to him. They also represented that rebels against the Government took refuge with the Guru. They suggested that if the Emperor did not take notice of him, he was sure to raise an insurrection before long. When the Emperor heard of these things, he sent a contingent of horsemen to bring the Guru to his court. On his arrival Guru Tegh Bahadur was imprisoned.

According to yet another version, Guru Tegh Bahadur went on travels in the country with two or three of his disciples. Near Akbarābād, they all entered a garden. Since they were hungry, they sent a Hindu shepherd, who was grazing his sheep nearby, with an *ashrafī* and a *doshāla* to the city to bring back food worth two rupees. Considering the shepherd too poor to possess these costly things, the sweat meat seller charged him with theft and took him to the *dārogha*. The *dārogha* sent some of his men with the shepherd to the garden where Guru Tegh Bahadur was staying. He was brought to the city and the matter was reported to the Emperor. The Emperor called Guru Tegh Bahadur to his presence and ordered him to accept Islam but the Guru refused.

However, the two latter versions appear to be lacking in veracity. The first version is the correct one: the Emperor

called Guru Tegh Bahadur from Makhawal on a request from Ram Rai ; imprisoned him in Shāhjahanābād ; and the Guru remained in confinement for some time.

It is related that one day one of his disciples asked him why he was sitting idle in the prison and did not make any effort to escape. The disciple also added that if he was allowed by the Guru he would destroy the whole city, together with the ruler, in a trice. Guru Tegh Bahadur praised him and then took his hand into his own. In this way the power of working a miracle was withdrawn from him. He went away after this uncanny event.

The officials of the Emperor used to come to the Guru every day for the miracle. Guru Tegh Bahadur used to be silent till he received the news that his son had sat on the *masnad* of Gurūship. Then he wrote the following *dohrā* to his son :

Gone is all strength and the body is in bonds. There is no remedy.
You are my only refuge O Lord ! Succour me as you once did
the Elephant.

Guru Gobind Singh sent the following *dohrā* in reply :

All strength is revived and bonds are snapped asunder and remedy
is found when the Lord Himself comes to succour. Everything is
in His hands.

Guru Tegh Bahadur became very happy to hear this appropriate reply from his son.

At last Ram Rai represented to the Emperor that Guru Tegh Bahadur was very proud of his spiritual greatness and he would not realize his fault until he was punished. Ram Rai also suggested that Guru Tegh Bahadur be asked to appear before the Emperor on the following day to work a miracle ; if he failed, he could be put to death. On the following day the Emperor ordered that Guru Tegh Bahadur should be brought before him. Ram Rai was also present when Guru Tegh Bahadur was called by the Emperor. Guru Tegh Bahadur was told that since he claimed to be the Guru (of the Sikhs) he should demonstrate his miraculous powers. Guru Tegh Bahadur remained silent. The Emperor was not inclined to punish a *darvesh*, but

Ram Rai insisted on demanding a miracle because of his enmity with Guru Tegh Bahadur. Guru Tegh Bahadur remained silent for sometime ; but then he said that it did not behove an Emperor to demand miracles from a *darvesh*; the only miracle the Guru could perform was that of offering prayers to God ; and his prayers were granted by God. Ram Rai insisted that Guru Tegh Bahadur should not be allowed to leave until he had worked a miracle. Guru Tegh Bahadur repeated that he should not be asked to do the impossible. If they still insisted, he would write a few words on a piece of paper and tie it on his neck, and his neck would be proof against the sword. Having said this he wrote something on a piece of paper and tied it round his neck. Addressing the Emperor he said that someone be asked to try his sword on the Guru, asserting as well that his head would never be severed from his body.

However, when the sword struck his head was off his body. Ram Rai and others present were wonder-struck. They examined the piece of paper that had been tied on the Guru's neck and found that Guru Tegh Bahadur had inscribed on it the following words : 'I gave up my head, but not my secret'. According to some, what was written on the piece of paper was : 'whosoever reveals the secrets of God stands accursed and condemned'.

The Emperor left the court after ordering that the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur should be well guarded and that no one should be allowed to come near it. The head of Guru Tegh Bahadur was taken by Makhan Shah to his own house.

According to some, this incident took place in the presence of the Emperor, but according to others, one of the royal officials went to the place where Guru Tegh Bahadur was imprisoned and asked him to work a miracle. So great was his persistence that Guru Tegh Bahadur decided to give up his life. As related above, he thought of tying a piece of paper on his neck.

According to yet others, Guru Tegh Bahadur became tired of imprisonment. He got up one morning and read the *pothī*, prayed before God and asked one of his followers, who was in attendance during the time of imprisonment, to remove his head

from his body. The follower was reluctant. He said that he could not escape retribution for such a black sin. Guru Tegh Bahadur reassured him with the words that they would remain together in the life hereafter. The follower, thereupon, agreed to do what he was asked to.

However, the first account is the most dependable. This incident took place on Maghar Sudī 5 in Sammat 1732. According to another version it took place in Sammat 1735

One day Guru Gobind Rai, sitting amidst his followers, referred to the means of obtaining the dead body of Guru Tegh Bahadur. A low-caste person stood up. He made obeisance to the Guru and said that he was prepared to undertake this task at the cost of his life. He had the confidence that he would succeed in bringing back the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Guru Gobind Rai was glad to hear this. The man in question started on his journey to Shāhjahānābād. He reached there in a few days. He found that Guru Tegh Bahadur's body was kept guarded all the time in a street of the Chandni Chauk by the servants of the Emperor. He went to stay at the house of Makhan Shah. He thought of the ways and means to execute his design. He was waiting for an opportunity. One day it was raining and the wind was blowing hard ; this, he thought, was the time he was waiting for. The night was pitch dark because of the thick clouds. Alongwith Makhan Shah, he reached the spot to find that the guards had left the street for a shelter from wind and rain. He was determined to take advantage of the situation. He reached the spot and dug up with a *belcha* to recover the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur. He handed over the torso to Makhan Shah and took the head to Guru Gobind Rai.

On the following day Makhan Shah submitted to the Emperor through a mediator that on the previous day a disciple of Guru Tegh Bahadur had gone to his house and given him the torso of Guru Tegh Bahadur, but took the head away with him. Makhan Shah requested the Emperor to give whatever orders he thought proper. The Emperor ordered the body to be cremated according to Hindu custom. Makhan Shah cremated the

body and raised a structure, adjoining the *dera* of Guru Harkrishan which is still in existence.

According to others, two persons of low caste, the father and the son, had gone to bring the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur back. In Delhi itself there was yet another disciple of Guru Tegh Bahadur, who was employed as charioteer (*rathvān*) by a certain *amīr*, and whom these two low-caste persons knew. They went to him and told him the object of their visit. The charioteer used every day to take his horse out for exercise. Therefore, he suggested that they should retrieve the body of the Guru and place it in the chariot. It would then be his job to take the body to Anandpur. On a dark, rainy night they went to the spot. The son killed his father with his own hands, left his dead body in the street and went away with the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur. He placed the body in the chariot and they rode out early in the morning to reach Anandpur.

However, the correct account is that the aforesaid person of low caste took the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur to Makhan Shah but carried the head with himself. In any case, the head of Guru Tegh Bahadur was placed before Guru Gobind Rai. He wept bitterly before cremating it. A structure was raised over the spot. Guru Gobind Rai was extremely pleased with the services of this person and uttered the following words : 'the Ranghretas are the sons of the Guru'. Also, Guru Gobind Rai asked what he would like to have from the Guru, emphatically suggesting that he should come out with his request without any reservation. The man submitted that since the Guru was so kindly disposed towards him he be allowed to bathe in the sacred pool at Amritsar. Guru Gobind Rai granted his request and told him that he was allowed to bathe in the sacred pool at Amritsar. None would stand in his way. Some of the Sikhs who were present at that time submitted that in the sacred pool at Amritsar only *brahman* and *khatrī* castes were allowed to bathe. The permission given to the Ranghreta would upset the traditional arrangement. They also added that they themselves were at the disposal of the Guru, ready to obey his orders ; if they were

ordered by the Guru to do anything of the sort they would certainly obey. Guru Gobind Rai told them that a *bungā* for the Ranghretas would be constructed at a spot there. Even today, the *bungā* can be seen in the south of the tank, adjoining the tree known as *dukh-bhanjani*. All the Ranghretas go to this place and bathe in the tank. Since that day the Ranghretas have been connected with the followers of Guru Gobind Rai. The Sikhs still refer to their low castes as Ranghretas.

In this account we find that the familiar elements of contemporary tradition appear with only slight variations. Tegh Bahadur was nominated as a successor by Guru Harkrishan as 'the *Bābā* of Bakāla' but many a Sodhī at Bakāla put forth his claim and Makhan Shah, witnessing the piety of Tegh Bahadur, acclaimed him to be the true Guru. Seeing the popularity of Guru Tegh Bahadur the other Sodhīs became jealous of him and Guru Tegh Bahadur left Bakāla for Delhi. There, Ram Rai made a representation against him but a Rajput noble interceded with the Emperor on his behalf and Guru Tegh Bahadur was allowed to visit places of pilgrimage. On his return to Delhi, he found Ram Rai implacable in his enmity and, therefore, he left Delhi and founded Makhawal on a piece of land purchased from the chief of Kahlur. When his son was fourteen years old, some of the nobles in Delhi made a representation against Guru Tegh Bahadur and he was summoned to Delhi. Knowing that he would not return alive he installed Gobind Rai on the *gaddī* before leaving Makhawal. At Delhi he was imprisoned on Ram Rai's suggestion. A disciple offered to destroy the city and its ruler through supranatural power but Guru Tegh Bahadur withdrew that power from him.

Guru Tegh Bahadur sent one *dohrā* to Guru Gobind Singh at Makhawal and received another *dohrā* in reply. On Ram Rai's insistence the Emperor demanded a miracle from Guru Tegh Bahadur. The Guru refused first but then claimed that no sword shall be effective against him because of a piece of paper tied on his neck. When tried, his head was severed from his body and it was discovered that the words inscribed on the piece of paper were : 'I gave up my head, but not my secret'. The head of Guru Tegh Bahadur was cremated at Makhawal and his torso at Delhi.

Butay Shah is the only writer who gives alternative versions of incidents : Guru Tegh Bahadur's identification at Bakāla because of his power of divination; Guru Tegh Bahadur's arrest because of his popularity not merely with the people but also with soldiers and refractory individuals; his arrest in Akbarābād when a shepherd boy with an *ashrafī* and a *doshāla* given to him by the Guru was apprehended on the charge of theft ; the words inscribed on the piece of paper tied by the Guru on his neck were 'whosoever reveals the secret of God stands accursed and condemned' ; demand of a miracle put forth by some officials and not by the Emperor in person. Similarly two versions are given of how the head and the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur were removed from the Chandni Chauk. And two dates are mentioned for the date of execution.

Butay Shah is the only chronicler to take notice of his immediate predecessors. His familiarity with the works of Ahmad Shah and Sohan Lal is beyond any doubt. On the whole he is inclined to agree with

Ahmad Shah rather than Sohan Lal. His agreement with Ahmad Shah on one particular point is significant : the initiative against Guru Tegh Bahadur came largely from Rām Rai. Butay Shah's disagreement with Sohan Lal on one particular point is also significant : Guru Tegh Bahadur was not arrested because of his popularity with the people or because he gave refuge to refractory individuals. Butay Shah reveals his familiarity with the Sikh tradition when he refers to the incident of Guru Tegh Bahadur's arrest at Akbarābād. This familiarity is reflected in the exact dates he gives for the birth of Guru Tegh Bahadur, his marriage and his death. Butay Shah's reference to the arms of Guru Hargobind could also come from a Sikh informant. Thus we find that Butay Shah's account of Guru Tegh Bahadur contains the largest number of elements not because he consulted earlier written records but because he consulted the works of his immediate predecessors as well as the Sikhs of his own day. Even when he gives preference to one version over another he does not indicate why. His treatment of the pontificate of Guru Tegh Bahadur is as much episodic as that of his predecessors. The larger amount of 'information' available to him does not enable him to interpret or even to present the pontificate in a different light.

7

IBRATNĀMA

Aliuddin, who thought of Lahore as his ancestral place, migrated to Ludhiana with his father, Mufti

Khairuddin, in 1823 to be patronized by the servants of the East India Company. Colonel C. M. Wade, the Political Agent at Ludhiana, suggested to him that he should write a history of the Panjab. Aliuddin remained preoccupied with other affairs, working for the officials of the Company at Ludhiana and Ferozepur and in Multan, Kashmir, the Derajat, Peshawar, Ghazni and Bamian, till the Panjab passed into British hands. His services, he felt, were not adequately rewarded. Nevertheless he wanted to make another attempt. He was familiar with the works of Sohan Lal and Butay Shah and, in the hope of gaining recognition and reward, he thought of Wade's advice. He decided to write a comprehensive book on the Panjab, including its topography, its minerals, its natural and agricultural products, its towns and cities, the customs of all its communities and their holy men as well as the political history. As a suitable gift for the Commissioner of Lahore he completed the *Ibratnāma* by 1854.³³

Aliuddin thought of his work as superior to that of Sohan Lal and Butay Shah. His comment on their works is indicative of his own professed objective. Sohan Lal had confined himself to the origin of the Sikhs and their conquests ; also, in Aliuddin's view, he had been partial to the Sikhs. Butay Shah's work was prolix and florid ; much of his meaning was lost to the reader.³⁴ Aliuddin aimed at combining perspicuity with economy. His account of Guru Tegh

33. This information is given by Aliuddin at the beginning of his work.

34. *Ibratnāma*, SHR 1277, Khalsa College, Amritsar, 3.

Bahadur is much shorter than Butay Shah's :³⁵

Guru Harkrishan died of small pox at Delhi in A. H. 1708, corresponding to Sammat 1721 and A.D. 1663. His *dera* is in Paharganj. When the news of Guru Harkrishan's death reached Kiratpur, every one of the descendants of the Gurus wished to occupy the *gaddī*. The issue had not yet been settled when Chandu Lal of Shāhjahānābād arrived at Kiratpur for making a particular offering to the Guru. Keeping the situation in mind, he thought of offering something to every claimant and to treat the one who would demand the full amount as the true Guru. With this bright idea he approached every claimant and presented two rupees each as an offering. Every one accepted the offering and blessed him; but none gave any indication of what was uppermost in his mind. He came to Guru Tegh Bahadur, son of Guru Arjan, and offered him two rupees, Tegh Bahadur asked him why he was not offering the full amount. Chandu Lal offered the *nazr* in full and two rupees besides as a *nazrāna*. He prostrated himself before the Guru to touch the ground with his forehead in reverence. In this way the office of Guruship was made to devolve upon Tegh Bahadur.

The news spread everywhere in due course and numerous persons became attached to Guru Tegh Bahadur. Ram Rai represented to the Emperor that Tegh Bahadur did not have any right to occupy Guru Harkrishan's office after his death and added that he had succeeded in collecting a following by bribing corrupt men; in this way he had usurped a position which, according to Ram Rai, belonged rightly to him; moreover, he was misleading people by asking them to call him *sachchā pātshāh* (the true king) and he claimed miraculous powers for himself; and if Ram Rai did not receive what was legitimately his due it was because of Guru Tegh Bahadur. On this account Guru Tegh Bahadur was called to Delhi. Knowing the strength of his enemies, Guru Tegh Bahadur had no hope of returning alive. Therefore, he took his entire family with him to Delhi.

35. *Ibratnāma*, 193-200.

On reaching Delhi, Guru Tegh Bahadur took up residence close to the *haveli* of Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur. On a report from the *amīrs* the Emperor ordered the Guru to be presented before him. When Raja Jai Singh heard of this he submitted to the Emperor that the holy man be allowed to go to places of pilgrimage and be presented before the Emperor on his return. The request was granted.

Guru Tegh Bahadur went to places of pilgrimage along with his family and stayed there for a long time. It was at one of these place that Guru Gobind Singh was born. He grew up there before Guru Tegh Bahadur came to think that the old dispute had blown over and the Emperor was no longer interested in his affairs. On this assumption he decided to return to his own country.

Ram Rai heard of this and once more represented to the Emperor. The Emperor summoned Guru Tegh Bahadur to the court. He came accordingly. The Emperor asked him why he called himself *sachchā pātshāh* and claimed to possess the power of working miracles. Also, the Emperor demanded a miracle from him. Guru Tegh Bahadur thought it more laudable to sacrifice his life than to reveal God's secret. He told the Emperor that he knew one charm which tied on the neck was proof against all weapons. The Emperor ordered the claim to be put to a test. On Maghar Sudhī 5 in Sammat 1732, corresponding to A. H. 1092, the charm in question was tied on the Guru's neck. He was brought to the *chabūtara* of the *kotwālī* of Shāhjahānābād at noon by the officials concerned. The executioner used his sword. With the very first stroke the Guru's head was severed from his body. He died thus. The head was taken by a low-caste man to Anandpur and the body was cremated after two or three days in Pahārganj by the few faithful followers of the Guru in Shāhjahānābād. On all the three spots in the *kotwālī*, in Pahārganj and in Anandpur suitable memorials have been raised to become places of worship.

After this, Ram Rai suffered from fearful remorse and dared not return to his country. He submitted to the Emperor that

some means of subsistence might be granted to him. His request was granted and he was given a *jāgīr*. He went to the place and established a *dera* which is now known as Dera Ram Rai.

This brief account of Guru Tegh Bahadur contains a couple of errors. Guru Tegh Bahadur is presented as the son of Guru Arjan who was actually his grandfather. The scene of his identification is Kiratpur and not Bakāla. There is also a significant variation. The person who discovered Tegh Bahadur as the true Guru because of his power of divination is Chandu Lal (whose traditional enmity with Guru Arjan was an essential element in Sikh tradition). There is no new element in Aliuddin's account. He does not give evidence of having consulted even Butay Shah and Sohan Lal. But he appears to have leaned heavily on Ahmad Shah.

Aliuddin is unique among the Persian chroniclers in presenting the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur entirely in terms of Ram Rai's rivalry and enmity with him. It was Ram Rai who represented to Aurangzeb in the first place that Guru Tegh Bahadur entertained temporal aspirations and claimed the power to work miracles. Guru Tegh Bahadur was called to Delhi but escaped because of Raja Jai Singh's intercession. When Guru Tegh Bahadur returned from the places of pilgrimage it was Ram Rai again who made a representation against him. And this time Ram Rai succeeded. Aliuddin does not fail to mention that Ram Rai received a *jāgīr* from the Emperor and founded an establishment of his own. Notwithstanding his confidence and gusto, Aliuddin

did not base his account on any written record of an earlier period.

8

CHĀR BĀGH-I-PANJĀB

Ganesh Das, a *qānūngo* under Ranjit Singh, first thought of writing on the Sikhs after the Anglo-Sikh War of 1845-46. After the subversion of the kingdom of Lahore he widened the scope of his work to cover the whole history of the Panjab from the earliest times to the annexation. Also, he added a lengthy description of the Panjab to his political narrative.³⁶ He did all this in the hope of receiving patronage from the new rulers of the Panjab. In fact his *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb* offers ample justification for the subversion of the kingdom of Lahore.³⁷ Nevertheless Ganesh Das shows great admiration for Ranjit Singh, and the bulk of the *Chār Bāgh* is devoted to his House. Early Sikh history is given a very brief treatment and the account of Guru Tegh Bahadur is very short indeed.³⁸

Guru Tegh Bahadur, son of Guru Hargobind, began to adorn the *gaddī* in the reign of Aurangzeb Alamgir. He had remained

36. For Ganesh Das, see J. S. Grewal, "Ganesh Das's *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*", *Miscellaneous Articles*, Guru Nanak University, Amritsar 1974, 135-45; "Ganesh Das on Sikh Policy", *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, Guru Nanak University, Amritsar 1972, 101-08; J. S. Grewal and Indu Banga, *Early Nineteenth Century Panjab*, Guru Nanak University, Amritsar 1975, 9-33.

37. J. S. Grewal, *Miscellaneous Articles*, 143.

38. *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb* (ed. Kirpal Singh), Khalsa College, Amritsar 1965, 109-11. The dates of the Christian Calender added to the text by the editor have been omitted in the translation given here.

on the *sajjāda* for 11 years, when on a Tuesday of Sammat 1731, in the 17th year of Aurangzeb's reign, he suffered death through Alamgir's tyranny in Shāhjahānābād. He gave his head but not the secret of God.

In A. H. 1067, Muhammad Aurangzeb Alamgir succeeded to the imperial throne. His zeal for religion was such that he used to call holy men into his presence to demand miracles from them. Some of the holy men like Shah Daula of Gujrat, Shah Sadruddin of Qasur and Shah Hasan Durr whose *takia* is close to Shahdara in Lahore, escaped from the clutches of the Emperor because of their spiritual powers. Others however, like Sarmad and Qalandar, submitted to their fate to become martyrs in the cause of their faith. Among the latter was Guru Tegh Bahadur. He was arrested in Azīmābād in accordance with the imperial order. In spite of repeated requests, he did not reveal the secret of God and suffered death at the hands of the executioner. In A. H. 1084, the 17th year of Aurangzeb's reign, he too willingly submitted to his fate and bowed to the will of God.

After the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the people at large became very resentful and transferred their affiliation to his son, Guru Gobind Singh.

In this brief notice of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Ganesh Das alludes to Guru Tegh Bahadur's refusal to work a miracle on the grounds that such a performance betrayed the secret of a gnostic's nearness to God. The facts of Guru Tegh Bahadur's pontificate mentioned by Ganesh Das are very few. Some of the information was available in Sujān Rai's *Khulāsat ut-Tawārīkh* which was known to Ganesh Das.³⁹ However, he has mentioned several individuals who were asked by Aurangzeb to work a miracle. Ganesh Das was familiar with most of the medieval chronicles

39. *Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb*, 299.

and he culled this information from them in support of his basic proposition that Aurangzeb used to demand miracles from those who enjoyed reputation of holiness. He mentions Sammat 1731 as the year of Guru Tegh Bahadur's death, which is contradicted by the 17th year of the reign of Aurangzeb. Similarly his reference to Azīmābād as the place of Guru Tegh Bahadur's arrest is based on the information of a contemporary who was ill-informed. Ganesh Das makes little use of contemporary tradition regarding Guru Tegh Bahadur. And outside that tradition very little was available.

9

HAQĪQAT-I-BINĀ WĀ URŪJ-I-FIRQA-I-SIKHĀN

As much at the beginning as at the end of the Sikh period it was difficult to obtain information on Guru Tegh Bahadur outside the tradition current in the Panjab. This is demonstrated most clearly by the anonymous author of the *Haqīqat-i-Binā wā Urūj-i-Firqa-i-Sikhān*. His account of Guru Tegh Bahadur runs as follows :⁴⁰

Guru Tegh Bahadur ascended the *gaddī* as the ninth Guru from Guru Nanak in a regular line of succession through Angad, Amardas, Ramdas, Arjan, Hargobind, Har Rai and Harkrishan. He came to have a very large number of disciples and followers. In their terminology the *murshid* is called Guru and the *murīd* is called Sikh. In the time of Guru Tegh Bahadur the number of Sikhs became extremely large.

40. *Haqīqat-i-Binā*, SHR 1286, Khalsa College, Amritsar, 3-6.

It was the reign of His Majesty, the *Khuld Makāni*. He had issued strict orders to the *subadārs* and the *faujdārs* of the Empire regarding the observance of the *sharī'at* and the destruction of temples and idols of the contumacious. The officials who disregarded the injunctions of the *sharī'at* were dismissed from service. Every year the *Sadr-us Sudūr* used to call the learned in the *sharī'at* to his presence to test their proficiency in the standard works. If their replies were correct they returned to their offices ; if not, some other persons were appointed in their place.

The news reached the Emperor regarding the large crowds that had gathered around Guru Tegh Bahadur, the faith of the *zamīndārs* in him, and the foundation of a new religious community. The Emperor ordered that the followers of Guru Tegh Bahadur were not to be molested if they lived like *faqīrs*, as was the custom among the *Nānakpantīs*. In fact they could be provided with the means of subsistence like the other grant es of the Empire in accordance with the line : 'friends and foes alike are welcome to the feast'. But they must dispense with horses and arms, and the other articles of pomp, grandeur and warfare. The *faujdār* of the *pargana* of Sarhind conveyed this order to Guru Tegh Bahadur. Because of the large number of his followers, the proud and confident Guru Tegh Bahadur replied that he was a *faqīr* and whatever he possessed was a gift from God and could not be refused ; and since he remained confined to his own place there was no justification for interfering with his affairs. The argument was so stretched on both sides that an appeal was made to arms and the Guru was dislodged by force.

Guru Tegh Bahadur went into the 'jungle', the territory between Shāhjahānābād and Lahore, and spent his days in distress. He lost all the horses and men he possessed. His disciples used to meet him stealthily to offer whatever little they could. Guru Tegh Bahadur started acting like men bereft of reason. Sometimes he would shoot at a horse, or he would ask his Sikhs if any one of them wanted to meet Guru Nanak and whosoever replied in affirmative became the target of his match-lock and was cremated by his companions. In this way several

Sikhs and a large number of horses were killed.

Every person who was killed at the hands of Guru Tegh Bahadur was called '*shahīdī singh*' and their descendants too are known by the same epithet. The Sikhs divide their offering from booty into three equal parts for the descendants of Guru Nanak, the descendants of his successors called Bhalla, and for the Shahīdī Singhs.

During those days Guru Tegh Bahadur used to utter prophecies at random and the fulfilment of some further confirmed the ignorant Sikhs in their faith. He told the Sikhs that in accordance with divine dispensation sparrows would prey upon hawks; obscure men of low caste would become leaders of men. The followers of the Guru interpreted these prophetic utterances as an earnest of their own success. The Guru ordered them to wear arms and worship iron to ensure their rise into prominence. It is now obligatory for the Sikhs to wear an iron bangle or chain round the wrist or the turban. The Guru also ordered the Sikhs not to entertain any prejudice against the low castes; every one who wished to join their circle should be admitted irrespective of his earlier creed. They should all eat together. This custom prevails among them even today. The army of the Sikhs came to be called the *Dal* and the Sikhs themselves came to be called the *Khālsa*. The reason for the latter appellation was that very often the *faujdārs* had to order the Sikhs to evacuate the *Khālisa Sharīfa* (the crown-lands) and the Sikhs used to reply that they themselves were the *Khālsa*, the essence of entire mankind. Guru Tegh Bahadur told his followers to adopt a distinct appearance. If others cut their hair and whiskers, the Sikhs should keep them uncut. Also the Sikhs have a strong hatred for smoking; their epithet for the smoking pipe is *besabara* (literally, one who has no patience). Their epithet for *bhang* is *sukhkha*, from *sukh* meaning comfort; they drink it with relish. No women are kept in their camps. If any one breaks this convention he is obliged to pay a fine. However, they keep a large number of handsome youngmen who are all well dressed and well armed horsemen. They serve their masters

during the day and the masters 'serve' them during the night. After the death of their masters they succeed to their property and themselves become masters of armies.

In short, in the state of mind described above Guru Tegh Bahadur wrote to prince Mu'azzam that he would become the Emperor (after Aurangzeb). During the reign of the *Khuld Manzil* Bahadur Shah, formerly Prince Mu'azzam, Guru Tegh Bahadur went to Shāhjahanābād and the Emperor granted a few villages to the Guru as promised. After that Guru Tegh Bahadur went back towards Lahore and, once more, men collected around him in large numbers, including some of the *zamīndārs*, the poor and the refractory elements. In a short time Guru Tegh Bahadur found himself to be the leader of a new community.

A community was indeed coming into existence. Whosoever from amongst the Hindus came to Guru Tegh Bahadur for initiation was admitted to the new order, whether he was one of the *khatris* who constitute the most ancient element of the Hindu society or one of the *jāts* who are numerous in that country. Carpenters, blacksmiths, peasants, shopkeepers, artisans and craftsmen too were similarly admitted. When a person came to Guru Tegh Bahadur to become a Sikh, the Guru immediately called for sweets and water and asked one of his followers to offer *ardās*. The follower would stand up and recite in Panjabi something in praise of Guru Nanak. This was called *ardās*. It is surmised that they heard the word *arzdāsht* from the Mughals and came to use for it the word *ardās*. They would then stir the water containing sweets with a sword or a dagger or any other weapon. All drank from the same vessel, disregarding whether one was a *kolī*, a *jāt* or a *zunnārdār*. What was left was called *parshād* which in their language means *tabarruk*. In place of *salām'alaik* they say *wāhgurū jī kī fateh*. In a battle also they loudly repeat the cry of *wāhgurū*. They let their hair loose when their horses are in full speed.

Before long, however, Guru Tegh Bahadur died. Guru Gobind Singh succeeded him to take up the challenge.

The author of the *Haqīqat* knows the line of succession from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh in which Tegn Bahadur is the ninth Guru. But this is nearly all that he knows about Guru Tegn Bahadur. Even the execution of the Guru through Aurangzeb's orders is not known to him. He makes Guru Tegn Bhadur meet Bahadur Shah to receive a *jāgīr*. This absurd notion suggests in fact that the author of the *Haqīqat* collected oral information from those who confused Guru Tegn Bahadur with Guru Gobind Singh. Indeed, Guru Tegn Bahadur is presented as the founder of a new community called the *Khālsa* whose obligation to wear arms and to keep the hair uncut is explicitly stated. Some other incidents mentioned by the author of the *Haqīqat* also remind the reader of the events of Guru Gobind Singh's life. With the life of Guru Tegn Bahadur, however, they do not have even the remotest resemblance. To say that the *Haqīqat-i-Binā' wā Urūj-i-Firqa-i-Sikhān* tells us practically nothing about the pontificate of Guru Tegn Bahadur is to make an understatement.

10

SIYAR AL-MUTĀKHIRĪN

Unlike any other chronicle under consideration, Ghulam Husain's *Siyar al-Mutākhirīn* was meant to be a general history of India from the death of Aurangzeb to his own times. He cannot be expected

to have paid any special attention to the Sikhs or to the Panjab. His greater interest in Bengal is evident from the *Siyar* itself. Nearly three-fourths of the book is devoted to the affairs of Bengal, including the transactions of the East India Company.⁴¹ Even the general history is carried, in about a fourth of the work, only upto the invasion of Nadir Shah.⁴² The subjugation of Banda Bahadur during the reign of Farrukh Siyar is mentioned as an important event and the earlier history of the Sikhs is related as a background to Banda Bahadur's activity. That is how Guru Tegh Bahadur is noticed by Ghulam Husain. In a work of about three hundred thousand words, he gives only a few hundred words to Guru Tegh Bahadur :⁴³

The eighth successor of (Guru) Nanak, named Tegh Bahadur, became a man of authority with a large number of followers. (In fact) several thousand persons used to accompany him as he moved from place to place. His contemporary, Hafiz Adam, a *faqīr* belonging to the group of Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi's followers, had also come to have a large number of *murīds* and

41. Ghulam Husain's *Siyar* was meant, among other things, to present an impartial evidence on the true character of the role of the East India Company in Bengal and to elucidate the nature of Warren Hastings' policies ; J.S. Grewal, *Muslim Rule in India*, 33 & n4. Cf. Ganda Singh, *A Bibliography of the Panjab*, 152.

42. Ghulam Husain himself says at the end of his work that he was unable to take up the narrative after the 22nd year of Muhanımad Shah's reign . *Siyar al-Mutākhırīn*, Calcutta 1833.

43. *Siyar al-Mutākhırīn*, 25-26.

Before coming to the account translated here, Ghulam Husain mentions that Guru Tegh Bahadur succeeded Guru Harkrishan and remained on the *gaddī* for eleven years. In the 17th year of Aurangzeb's reign he was imprisoned and executed according to the Emperor's orders. Guru Gobind Singh succeeded Guru Tegh Bahadur and remained on the *gaddī* for a long time.

followers. Both these men (Guru Tegh Bahadur and Hafiz Adam) used to move about in the Panjab, adopting the habit of coercion and extortion. Tegh Bahadur used to collect money from Hindus, and Hafiz Adam from Muslims. The royal *wāqī'a-nigārs* wrote to the Emperor Alamgir that two *faqīrs*, one Hindu and the other Muslim, named so and so, had adopted such and such a manner of activity, adding that if their authority increased, they could become even refractory. Having received this news, Alamgir wrote to the *hākīm* of Lahore that both of them should be arrested. Hafiz Adam should be banished from the imperial territories towards lands inhabited by Afghans beyond Attock and Peshawar, and should never be allowed to return. Tegh Bahadur should be arrested and kept in confinement. Action was taken in accordance with the order. After some days another order came regarding Tegh Bahadur: that he should be put to death and his body cut into pieces be hung on the various points of the city (wall). What was ordered came to pass. However, the followers of Tegh Bahadur used to move about like *fuqarā*, and it was not their habit to wear arms. After Aurangzeb's death, when Bahadur Shah was the Emperor, according to another version towards the end of the reign of Aurangzeb himself, Guru Gobind Singh ascended the *gaddī* of his father, gradually collected the scattered followers, and collected also horses and arms to distribute among them.

An *a priori* expectation that Ghulam Husain would not take pains for his account of Guru Tegh Bahadur is confirmed by this brief notice. There is no reference to demand for a miracle which was an essential element in the tradition current in the Panjab. In fact none of the elements of that tradition finds mention in Ghulam Husain's account. Aurangzeb does not call Guru Tegh Bahadur to Delhi. He is sending orders regarding Guru Tegh Bahadur to the governor of Lahore; the imprisonment and execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur take place in Lahore; and

his body, torn into pieces, is hung at various points on the wall of the city. Thus Ghulam Husain is not only out of touch with the tradition in the Panjab, he is also making gross errors of fact which would have been impossible to make on the basis of written records. The anachronistic juxtaposition of Hafiz Adam with Guru Tegh Bahadur, which lends plausibility to Ghulam Husain's tale, betrays him further ; he did not consult any written record for Hafiz Adam either. The report of the news-writers that Guru Tegh Bahadur was a potential danger, though a traditional element, is nonetheless contradicted by Ghulam Husain himself in the last sentence : 'But the followers of Guru Tegh Bahadur used to move about like *fugarā* and they were not in the habit of wearing arms'.⁴⁴ What is left of Ghulam Husain's account is that Guru Tegh Bahadur was the eighth successor of Guru Nanak and was executed through Aurangzeb's orders. This precisely is the statement that Ghulam Husain himself makes in the *Siyar* before giving the amplified account which has been examined.⁴⁵ When Ghulam Husain tells us that his source of information for the *Siyar al-Mutākhirīn* were 'reliable persons',⁴⁶ we may be sure that this statement cannot apply to his account of the pontificate of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Ghulam Husain's account, far from being based on earlier written

44. The sentences that follow this statement make it abundantly clear that, according to Ghulam Husain, arms were worn by the Sikhs for the first time during the pontificate of Guru Gobind Singh.

45. *Siyar al-Mutākhirīn*, 25.

46. *Siyar al-Mutākhirīn*, 1.

records, is not based even on the tradition current in the Panjab.⁴⁷

47. Cf. Fauja Singh, "Execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur", *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Vol. I, No. 2, 79-89; J. S. Grewal, "Freedom and Responsibility in Historical Scholarship", *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Vol. II, No. 1, 124-33.

III

CONCLUSION

Looking at the evidence collectively presented by our chroniclers we notice first that they know Guru Tegh Bahadur as the successor of Guru Harkrishan and the predecessor of his own son, Guru Gobind Singh. Most of them talk of Patna as the place of Gobind Rai's birth but about the place of Tegh Bahadur's birth they say nothing. Butay Shah is the only exception who mentions Rāmdāspura (Amritsar). For the time of Guru Tegh Bahadur's birth, Buddh Singh mentions only a year, A.H. 1093; Butay Shah gives a precise date, Māgh 19, Sammat 1680 (A.D. 1623). The rest of the chroniclers are silent about the time as well as the place of Guru Tegh Bahadur's birth. Relevant information was not available outside the Sikh tradition and Butay Shah's dependence on that tradition gets underlined even if the date given by him is not treated as necessarily accurate.

Most of our chroniclers have either nothing or very little to say about the family ties of Guru Tegh Bahadur. One of them refers to Guru Arjan as his father; another refers to Guru Harkrishan; and only four of them refer to Guru Hargobind as the father of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Ahmad Shah mentions Guru Tegh Bahadur's wife, Mata Gujri; Butay Shah mentions also Guru Tegh Bahadur's mother, Mata Nanaki; and Bakht Mal refers also to his brothers : Gurditta, Ani Rai, Attal Rai and Surat Singh (Suraj Mal). In this information there is a clear reflection

of Bakht Mal's closer association with the Sikhs and the tradition current among them.

Coming to Guru Tegh Bahadur's life before his accession to the *gaddī* of *gurūship*, Buddh Singh makes a rather general statement about his life of penance and devotion, and Butay Shah refers to his absorption in God. Bakht Mal says that Tegh Bahadur and Surat Singh took refuge in the northern hills during the lifetime of their father. Butay Shah implies that Tegh Bahadur was among the relatives of Guru Hargobind who had taken up residence at Bakāla when he left the plains for the hills. This meagre and contradictory information is as much an indication of the chroniclers' lack of interest in biographical detail as a measure of their distance from the Sikh tradition.

About Guru Tegh Bahadur's accession to the *gaddī* of *Gurūship*, the earliest three and the latest two of our chroniclers do not refer to his nomination by Guru Harkrishan. The intervening five refer to Guru Harkrishan's remark 'the *Bābā* at Bakāla' in response to the anxiety of his followers about the successor at the time of his death. They all tend to assume that the remark was vague. Khushwaqt Rai explicitly states that it was not understood by the followers of Guru Harkrishan and the office remained vacant for a few months. In any case, plurality of claimants was the result largely of the vagueness of the remark and the problem thus arose of indentifying the true successor of Guru Harkrishan. Ahmad Shah states simply that Makhan Shah identified Tegh Bahadur as the Guru. Butay Shah states that Makhan

Shah identified him as the Guru on account of his piety and holy countenance. The others refer to the idea of discovering the true Guru by testing the power of divination among the claimants either by one of the Sikhs or by Chandu Lal or Makhan Shah. The amount of offering vowed is mentioned as 525 or 500 or 300 rupees. Differences of detail apart, the chroniclers' evidence inclines in favour of the nomination of Tegh Bahadur by Guru Harkrishan through a vague remark which gave rise to the plurality of claimants creating the problem of identifying the true successor. Here we have the Sikh tradition, refracted through the chroniclers. Following the Sikh tradition, Ahmad Shah and Butay Shah mention the continued opposition of the Sodhīs at Bakāla even after the accession.

About the time and place of Guru Tegh Bahadur's accession too, though there is no unanimity, there is a kind of consensus among our chroniclers. According to Aliuddin, the accession of Guru Tegh Bahadur took place at Kiratpur. According to Bakht Mal, Khushwaqt Rai, Sohan Lal, Ahmad Shah and Butay Shah, it took place at Bakāla. The others are silent about the place. None of the chroniclers makes a direct statement about the time of accession. However, some of them provide information that enables us to work out the time of accession. Ganesh Das states that Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed in the 17th year of Aurangzeb's reign and his pontificate lasted eleven years. Thus, the year of the accession can be worked out. However, Ganesh Das also mentions Sammat 1731 as the year of Guru

Tegh Bahadur's execution, which would either reduce the duration of his pontificate or change the year of his accession. In Khushwaqt Rai's account the duration of Guru Tegh Bahadur's pontificate is 10 years, 2 months and 21 days; the date of his execution is Maghar Sudī 5, Sammat 1732. This last date is given also by Bakht Mal, Sohan Lal and Ahmad Shah but the duration mentioned by them is 10 years, 7 months and 21 days. The near consensus that Guru Tegh Bahadur ascended the *gaddī* of Guruship 10 years, 7 months and 20 days before Maghar Sudī 5, Sammat 1732, is the result of a literal acceptance of the Sikh tradition on the point by our chroniclers.

On the years between Guru Tegh Bahadur's accession and his execution, our chroniclers do not have much to say. Nearly all of them assume that Guru Tegh Bahadur was performing the normal duties of his office. Buddh Singh, Bakht Mal and Sohan Lal refer specifically to the open kitchen maintained by him for all and sundry. They also refer to large quantities of offering received in cash and kind, and to the majestic grandeur of the Guru. Buddh Singh and Khushwaqt Rai mention that followers of Guru Tegh Bahadur used to call him *sachchā pātshāh*. Sohan Lal refers to refractory individuals seeking refuge with the Guru. But none of the chroniclers implies that Guru Tegh Bahadur entertained political ambition. Ahmad Shah, Genesh Das and Aliuddin do not go into any detail of his activity and Butay Shah categorically rejects the version given by Sohan Lal. Our chroniclers are not clear about the scenes of Guru Tegh

Bahadur's activity. Aliuddin tends to assume that the Guru was active at Kiratpur. Buddh Singh and Bakht Mal appear to assume that he stayed at Bakāla. According to Sohan Lal, Guru Tegh Bahadur worked all the time in the Malwa.

Only four of our chroniclers talk of Guru Tegh Bahadur's early visit to Delhi as a prelude to his visit to places outside the provinces of Lahore and Delhi. According to Khushwaqt Rai, Aurangzeb called Guru Tegh Bahadur to Delhi on the basis of the news of his pomp and grandeur. In Aliuddin's account, he is called to Delhi because of Ram Rai's representation to the Emperor. According to Ahmad Shah and Butay Shah, Guru Tegh Bahadur voluntarily moved to Delhi. All the four chroniclers nevertheless refer to Aurangzeb's intention of demanding a miracle, and to intercession on behalf of the Guru by a Sawai noble, or more specifically by Jai Singh Sawai or Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur. Whosoever interceded on his behalf succeeded in getting the permission to take the Guru on a campaign. Consequently, Guru Tegh Bahadur visited Benares, Patna, Dacca and other places and returned either to Delhi or to the place of his permanent residence. According to Ahmad Shah and Butay Shah, Makhowal was founded by Guru Tegh Bahadur after his return from these travels. Both in its detail and variation, we have here basically the Sikh tradition mediated by our chroniclers.

By far the bulk of Guru Tegh Bahadur's account given by our chroniclers is devoted to his death and the circumstances connected with it. The author of the *Haqīqat-i-Binā* is alone in presenting the Guru's death as a natural one. All others refer to his

execution. According to Buddh Singh, Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed in the Deccan; in Ghulam Husain's account, he is executed at Lahore; but all other chroniclers agree that he was executed at Delhi. They do not agree, however, on either the cause or the detail of incidents connected with the execution. Ganesh Das attributes the Guru's arrest, trial and execution to Aurangzeb's excessive zeal for his religion which induced him to persecute the leaders of opinions he wished to suppress. Ghulam Husain, on the other hand, refers to Guru Tegh Bahadur's practice of extorting money from the Hindus in order to increase his resources and authority, which the news-writers reported to the Emperor. Buddh Singh, Bakht Mal, Khushwaqt Rai and Sohan Lal refer to the Guru's popularity, his open kitchen and his grandeur reported or misreported to the Emperor by either the news-writers or some other persons. Even Sohan Lal, who states that Guru Tegh Bahadur allowed the refractory individuals to stay with him, does not imply that he had any temporal aspirations. The remaining three chroniclers, Ahmad Shah, Butay Shah and Aliuddin, attribute Guru Tegh Bahadur's arrest and imprisonment to the enmity of Ram Rai and some nobles at the court of Aurangzeb. None of the chroniclers appears to believe that Guru Tegh Bahadur cherished political aspirations. Their evidence accords well with the Sikh tradition.

All the eight of our chroniclers who describe Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution agree that Aurangzeb demanded a miracle from him. Most of them are aware of the significance of this demand. Guru

Tegh Bahadur virtually claimed divine sanction for his mission, the propagation of the faith enunciated by Guru Nanak. But what was the proof ? The proof of one's nearness to God, it was generally believed, was the power to work miracles. And in the trial of Guru Tegh Bahadur, performance of a miracle is insisted upon. According to Buddh Singh, the Emperor first questioned the Guru about his name and, in his reply, Guru Tegh Bahadur disclaimed worldly aspirations. Then the Emperor asked the Guru to perform a miracle as the proof of his spiritual power. When the Emperor found that the Guru was unable to work a miracle he ordered the Guru to be put to death. According to Bakht Mal, Guru Tegh Bahadur did not wish to betray God's secret and, therefore, he asserted that he was proof against all weapons and the Emperor, annoyed over this assertion, ordered his execution. According to Khushwaqt Rai, Guru Tegh Bahadur tied on his neck a piece of paper with some words on it while asserting that he was proof against the sword. This last version is given by the majority of the chroniclers. There are differences of detail, but they all agree on the essentials : the demand for a miracle made by the Emperor and refused by Guru Tegh Bahadur either directly or by implication. This precisely was the Sikh tradition.

Much of the detail too, in connection with the imprisonment and execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur, comes from the Sikh tradition. The prophecy about the destruction of the Empire, shorn of the differences of form, is essentially an element of Sikh tradition,

like the prophecy about the appearance of a brave man to avenge atrocities. That a follower of Guru Tegh Bahadur wanted to destroy the city, or the Empire, with the Guru's permission is mentioned by Sohan Lal and Butay Shah, and by them is mentioned also the characteristically Sikh tradition that Guru Tegh Bahadur had written a particular *dohrā* to his son at Makhwal and received another particular *dohrā* in reply at Delhi. According to Ahmad Shah and Butay Shah, Guru Tegh Bahadur nominated his son, Gobind Rai, as his successor at Makhwal before leaving for Delhi. The basis for this statement too is the Sikh tradition. Bakht Mal and Butay Shah mention one exceptional thing about the execution : a Sikh severed the Guru's head from the body before the executioner could touch it. But this information, as Bakht Mal himself tells us, came from the Sikhs themselves. Similarly, only a Sikh could have told Khushwaqt Rai that the head of Guru Tegh Bahadur was not allowed to roll on the ground.

About the time and place of Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution, there is no unanimity but there is a near consensus among those of our chroniclers who are articulate on the point. Buddh Singh states that the execution took place in the Deccan somewhere. Ganesh Das and Ghulam Husain place it in the 17th year of Aurangzeb's reign but whereas the former mentions Delhi the latter assumes that the place of Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution was Lahore. Bakht Mal mentions the *kotwālī* in Delhi. Khushwaqt Rai, Sohan Lal, Ahmad Shah, Butay Shah and Aliuddin mention the Chandni Chauk in Delhi as the place and

Maghar Sudī 5, Sammat 1732, as the time of the execution. Similarly, they are in agreement that the head of Guru Tegh Bahadur was cremated at Anandpur-Makhowal and the torso was cremated outside Delhi. One of them mentions Rakābganj, another refers to the vicinity of the *samādh* of Guru Harkrishan, and yet another to Pahārganj as the place where the torso was cremated. There are varying versions also of those who cremated the torso. Nevertheless, the overwhelming evidence of our chroniclers supports the Sikh tradition which in fact is their source : the *kotwālī* of the Chandni Chauk in Delhi as the place of the execution; Maghar Sudī 5, Sammat 1732, as the date; the cremation of the head at Anandpur-Mukhowal; and the cremation of the torso outside the city of Delhi.

Our chroniclers give varying versions of how the head of Guru Tegh Bahadur was taken to Anandpur-Makhowal. Bakht Mal makes the simple statement that the Sikhs took it to Anandpur. In Khushwaqt Rai's account, a low-caste Sikh who is present in Delhi catches hold of the head before it could fall on the ground and runs to Makhowal. Aliuddin refers simply to a low-caste man taking the head to Anandpur. In the accounts of Ahmad Shah and Butay Shah the low-caste man comes as a volunteer from Anandpur. They both agree that he went to Makhan Shah's house in Delhi, retrieved the body and took the head to Makhowal. They also agree that the head had already been taken by Makhan Shah to his house. In Sohan Lal's version, not one but two low-caste men, the father and the

son, come from Anandpur and they contact a charioteer in Delhi; the son kills his father and, with the charioteer's help, takes Guru Tegh Bahadur's body to Anandpur. The other chroniclers are silent on this point. But all those who refer to one or two volunteers from Makhwal make use of a Sikh tradition current in their own times.

About the legacy of Guru Tegh Bahadur's pontificate, our chroniclers confine themselves to the last event of his life : his execution. They refer to memorials raised on the spots connected with the event and the cremation of the head and the body. They refer to the *bungā* of the Ranghretas at Amritsar. One of them refers to Aurangzeb's regret; another to the distress of the people of Delhi; and yet another, to the resentment of the people and the transfer of their affiliation to Guru Gobind Singh. One of them refers to Guru Gobind Singh taking up the challenge. None of the chroniclers looks upon the pontificate, or the execution, in terms of its significance for Sikh history. For the Sikhs, however, the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur was a turning point in their history.

No single account of Guru Tegh Bahadur's pontificate is coherent in itself. There are factual and logical contradictions which indicate that our chroniclers were not seriously concerned with 'when' and 'where' and 'why'. Some of them visualize the entire activity of Guru Tegh Bahadur in one place : Bakāla Makhwal or the Malwa, besides of course Delhi or Lahore or the Deccan where the Guru is executed in a given account. Guru Tegh Bahadur's visit to places

outside the provinces of Lahore and Delhi is treated as an insignificant episode. The dates given by all our chroniclers put together are only a few. Some of them contradict themselves even about the duration of the pontificate. In Ahmad Shah's account for example, Gobind Rai is born at Patna after the accession of Guru Tegh Bahadur to the *gaddi* of Guruship and the total duration of the pontificate is less than 11 years, and yet Gobind Rai is 14 years old at the time of Guru Tegh Bahadur's execution. The three pieces of information seem to have come from different sources and Ahmad Shah mentions each one of them at a place which appeared to him to be appropriate. Butay Shah does precisely the same. The number of logical contradictions is even more serious than the number of factual contradictions, both of which reveal the basic attitude of the chroniclers towards the pontificate of Guru Tegh Bahadur : it was casual. Their treatment of the pontificate is episodic. They lacked any meaningful identification with the subject which was given to them by their patrons. The lack of any social commitment, or awareness, on their part further reinforced their basic attitude. On one point, however, they reflect their communal affiliation : whereas the majority of the Hindu writers place the burden of responsibility for the death of Guru Tegh Bahadur entirely on the shoulders of Aurangzeb, the Muslim writers lighten it by apportioning an important, or crucial role, to Ram Rai.

On the basis of this analysis it is easy to see that the chief merit of the evidence presented by our

chroniclers on the pontificate of Guru Tegh Bahadur consists in their embodying elements of the Sikh tradition as it was current during their times. However, this evidence is thrice removed from the recorded Sikh tradition. No written source in Gurmukhi was available to them and they had to depend on those who had heard things from those who had written about them or read them. Furthermore, those elements are seen refracted through the mind of the chroniclers. The present-day historian of Guru Tegh Bahadur can safely afford to shut the Persian chronicles and open the Gurmukhi works. It may be suggested, indeed, that more meaningful evidence on a people who at a certain stage of their history were at the receiving end is likely to come from them rather than those who identified themselves with the powers that were. Paradoxically, the 'worm's eyeview' is likely to be more useful to the historian than the 'bird's eyeview' in studying such historical situations.

TABULATED CONTENTS

Risāla Dar Ahwāl-i-Nānak Shāh Darvesh

<i>Birth and Family Ties</i>	Born in A. H. 1093 ; father : Guru Harkrishan.
<i>Early Life</i>	Generally, characterized by penance and devotion.
<i>Accession</i>	
<i>Activity and Reaction</i>	Maintained an open kitchen and came to have a large number of followers ; they used to call him <i>sachchā pādshāh</i> ; the news-writers of the province of Lahore reported the matter to the Emperor in the Deccan.
<i>Trial and Execution</i>	Anxious to witness a miracle, the Emperor called Guru Tegh Bahadur to the Deccan ; the Guru insisted that he was a mere devotee of God ; he also explained that neither his name <i>Tegh Bahadur</i> nor the epithet <i>sachchā pādshāh</i> used for him implied temporal aspiration on his part ; inferring that the Guru could not work a miracle, the Emperor ordered his execution.
<i>Aftermath</i>	Gobind Singh was born posthumously ; a memorial was raised on the spot where Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed in the Deccan.

Khālsanāma

<i>Birth and Family Ties</i>	Father : Guru Hargobind ; mother : Nanaki brothers : Gurditta, Ani Rai, Attal Rai and Suraj Singh ; wife : Gujri.
<i>Early Life</i>	Took refuge in the hills with his father because of danger from the latter's enemies.
<i>Accession</i>	Before Guru Harkrishan died of small pox in Delhi on Chet Sudī 14, Sammat 1721, his followers asked him about his successor and he replied, 'the Bābā of Bakāla' ; there arose several claimants at Bakāla ; one of the Sikhs in search of the Guru, who had vowed to offer 500 silver coins, thought of identifying him by offering a little to each ; Tegh Bahadur asked for the full amount vowed ; he was hailed as the Guru.
<i>Activity and Reaction</i>	Maintained an open kitchen and came to have a large following ; though deeply religious, he used to live in majestic grandeur ; Aurangzeb heard about him and called him to Delhi.
<i>Trial and Execution</i>	The Emperor demanded a miracle ; not to betray God's secret, Guru Tegh Bahadur refused to work a miracle ; but he claimed that no sword could kill him ; Aurangzeb ordered his execution ; thus died Guru Tegh Bahadur on Maghar Sudī 5, Sammat 1732, having remained on the <i>gaddī</i> for 10 years, 7 months, and 21 days.
<i>Aftermath</i>	The head of Guru Tegh Bahadur was taken to Anandpur to be cremated there ; the torso was cremated at Rakābganj ; these spots became places of pilgrimage for the Sikhs ; Sultan Ali Gauhar granted the revenues of a village for these shrines and Sardar Baghel Singh granted a daily allowance.

Tawārīkh-i-Sikhān

*Birth
and
Family Ties*

Early Life

Accession

The followers of Guru Harkrishan asked him about his successor at the time of his death and he replied, 'the Bābā of Bakāla'; they did not understand; the office remained vacant for some time; at Bakāla, meanwhile, there arose several claimants; a Sikh trader who had vowed to offer 500 rupees to the Guru turned up and Tegh Bahadur divined the amount vowed; thus identified, he was installed as the Guru.

*Activity
and
Reaction*

At Makhawal, Guru Tegh Bahadur used to receive from all quarters of the Empire offerings in cash and kind, including horses and elephants; the followers used to call him *sachchā pādshāh*; Aurangzeb called him to Delhi to test his supernatural powers.

*Trial
and
Execution*

The Emperor demanded a miracle; the Guru realized the necessity of sacrificing his life; with a piece of paper tied on his neck, when the sword struck his head was severed from the body; thus died Guru Tegh Bahadur on Maghar Sudī 5, Sammat 1732, having remained on the *gaddī* for 10 years, 2 months and 21 days.

Aftermath

A sweeper caught hold of the Guru's head before it could fall on the ground; took it to Anandpur to be cremated; a *banjāra* Sikh removed the torso from the Chandni Chauk and cremated it outside the city; the people of Delhi were distressed; and the Emperor saw the injustice of his orders.

Umdat ut-Tawārīkh

*Birth
and
Family Ties**Early Life**Accession*

The followers of Guru Harkrishan asked him about his successor at the time of his death and he replied, 'the Bābā of Bakāla'; they went to Bakāla and found several claimants there; Makhan Shah, who had vowed to offer 300 rupees to the Guru, started offering one rupee each; Tegh Bahadur asked for all the 300; Makhan Shah proclaimed his discovery and Tegh Bahadur was hailed as the Guru.

*Activity
and
Reaction*

In Malwa, Guru Tegh Bahadur maintained an open kitchen; the number of his followers increased and included soldiers and horsemen; refractory individuals took refuge with him; wrong reports were sent to Aurangzeb; he called the Guru to Delhi to demand a miracle.

*Trial
and
Execution*

Questioned about his name the Guru replied that his correct name was not *Tegh* but *Degh Bahadur*; the Emperor then demanded a miracle; the Guru refused to work a miracle, the wrath of God: he was imprisoned; feeling reassured that his son would prove to be a worthy successor, Guru Tegh Bahadur decided to sacrifice his life; with a piece of paper tied on his neck when the sword struck his head was severed from the body; thus died Guru Tegh Bahadur on Maghar Sudī 5, Sammat 1732, having remained on the *gaddī* for 10 years, 7 months and 21 days.

Aftermath

A *faqīr* prophesied calamity; people were full of grief; a low-caste volunteer from Anandpur retrieved the body of Guru Tegh Bahadur, with the help of a charioteer; a *bungā* was constructed at Amritsar for all low-caste Sikhs.

Zikr-i-Guruān wā Ibtidā-i-Singhān

*Birth**and*

Wife : Gujri

*Family Ties**Early Life**Accession*

At the time of his death in Sammat 1721, Guru Harkrishan referred to 'the Babā of Bakāla' as his successor ; there were several claimants at Bakāla ; Makhan Shah identified Tegh Bahadur as the true Guru.

*Activity**and**Reaction*

Because of the enmity of the Sodhis of Bakāla, Guru Tegh Bahadur went with Makhan Shah to Delhi ; approached by some *amīrs*, the Emperor decided to call the Guru to the court ; a Sawāī courtier interceded and took the Guru with him on a campaign ; Guru Tegh Bahadur visited Patna and other places of pilgrimage ; he returned to Delhi but left it soon afterwards ; he founded Makhawal on a piece of land purchased from the Raja of Kahlur.

*Trial**and**Execution*

On representation from some *amīrs*, the Emperor called the Guru to Delhi ; installing Gobind Rai at Makhawal, Guru Tegh Bahadur went to Delhi to be imprisoned on Ram Rai's suggestion ; eventually he tied a piece of paper, with some words inscribed on it, on his neck as proof against the sword ; when the sword struck, his head was severed from the body ; thus died Guru Tegh Bahadur on Maghar Sudī 5, Sammat 1732, having remained on the *gaddī* for 10 years, 7 months and 21 days.

Aftermath

A volunteer from Makhawal went to Delhi, took the torso from the Chandni Chauk to the house of Makhan Shah, exchanged it with the head of Guru Tegh Bahadur and took the head to Makhawal to be cremated there ; the torso was cremated by Makhan Shah near the *samādh* of Guru Harkrishan ; memorials were raised on the spots of cremation.

Tārīkh-i-Panjāb

<i>Birth and Family Ties</i>	Born on 19 Māgh, Sammat 1680, at Rāmdāspur (Amritsar) ; father : Guru Hargobind ; mother : Nanaki ; wife : Gujri.
<i>Early Life</i>	Presumably stayed at Bakāla when Guru Hargobind went into the hills.
<i>Accession</i>	The followers of Guru Harkrishan asked him about his successor at the time of his death and he replied, 'the Bābā of Bakāla'; there were several Sodhi pretenders at Bakāla but Tegh Bahadur was not among them ; Makhan Shah identified him as the true Guru for his pious demeanour and holy countenance; he assumed Guruship but he did not wear the arms of Guru Hargobind ; they were reserved for Guru Gobind Singh.
<i>Activity and Reaction</i>	Because of the enmity of the Sodhis at Bakāla, Guru Tegh Bahadur went with Makhan Shah to Delhi ; on representation from Ram Rai, the Emperor called the Guru to the court but a Sawālī courtier interceded and took the Guru with him on a campaign ; Guru Tegh Bahadur visited Patna and other places; when he returned to Delhi he was called to the court because of Ram Rai's enmity ; Guru Tegh Bahadur left Delhi and founded Makhwal on a piece of land purchased from the Raja of Kahlur.
<i>Trial and Execution</i>	On representation from some <i>amīrs</i> , the Emperor called the Guru to Delhi ; installing Gobind Rai at Makhwal, Guru Tegh Bahadur went to Delhi; Ram Rai accused him of usurpation and temporal ambition, suggesting that he should perform a miracle ; eventually Guru Tegh Bahadur tied on his neck a piece of paper; when the sword struck, his head was severed from the body ; thus died Guru Tegh Bahadur on Maghar Sudī 5, Sammat 1732.
<i>Aftermath</i>	A low-caste volunteer from Makhwal went to Delhi, took the torso from the Chandni Chauk to the house of Makhan Shah and exchanged it with the head which was cremated at Makhwal and the torso was cremated by Makhan Shah near the <i>dera</i> of Guru Harkrishan ; memorials were raised on the spots and a <i>bungā</i> was constructed at Amritsar for all low-caste Sikhs.

Ibratnāma

*Birth**and**Family Ties*

Father : Guru Arjan

*Early Life**Accession*

When the news of Guru Harkrishan's death reached Kiratpur, several claimants arose ; Chandu Lal of Delhi thought of offering two rupees each, instead of the full amount vowed, and Tegh Bahadur asked for the full amount ; thus, his identity was disclosed.

*Activity**and**Reaction*

Guru Tegh Bahadur's following became numerous and, on Ram Rai's representation, the Emperor called him to Delhi ; Jai Singh of Jaipur interceded and took the Guru with him on a campaign; Guru Tegh Bahadur visited places of pilgrimage and returned to Kiratpur.

*Trial**and**Execution*

On a fresh representation from Ram Rai, the Emperor called Guru Tegh Bahadur to Delhi and demanded a miracle ; the Guru used a charm as proof against all weapons ; when the sword struck his head was severed from the body on Maghar Sudī 5, Sammat 1732, corresponding to A. H. 1093.

Aftermath

The head was taken by a low-caste to Anandpur to be cremated there by Guru Gobind Singh ; the torso was cremated in Paharganj ; memorials were raised in the Chandni Chauk and over the spots of cremation ; Ram Rai, out of remorse and fear, did not return to his own country and got a *jāgīr* elsewhere.

Chār Bāgh-i-Panjāb

*Birth
and
Family Ties*

Father : Guru Hargobind

Early Life

Accession

*Activity
and
Reaction*

*Trial
and
Execution*

Because of his excessive zeal for religion, Aurangzeb got Guru Tegh Bahadur arrested and demanded a miracle ; he refused to betray God's secret ; the Emperor ordered his execution ; this happened in the 11th year of his pontificate, the 17th year of Aurangzeb's reign, corresponding to Sammat 1731.

Aftermath

People felt aggrieved, and gave their allegiance to Guru Gobind Singh.

Haqīqat-i-Binā wā Urūj-i-Firqa-i-Sikhān

*Birth
and
Family Ties*

Early Life

Accession

*Activity
and
Reaction*

The news of Guru Tegh Bahadur's activity induced the Emperor to take action against him.

*Trial
and
Execution*

Aftermath

Guru Gobind Singh took up the challenge.

Siyar al-Mutākhirīn

Birth and Family Ties

Early Life

Accession

Activity and Reaction

The followers of Guru Tegh Bahadur grew in numbers ; he started extorting money from the Hindus ; the news-writers reported the matter to the Emperor, suggesting that the Guru was potentially dangerous ; the Emperor ordered the Governor of Lahore to arrest him.

Trial and Execution

Guru Tegh Bahadur was arrested and imprisoned, presumably in Lahore ; another order came from the Emperor and the Guru was put to death ; his body was torn into pieces and hung on the city wall.

Aftermath

Guru Gobind Singh instructed his followers to wear arms.

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